The COMMONWEAL

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Italy Speaking

WE DO NOT often indulge a natural instinct to rejoice over every and any report from Europe showing disunion in the Axis. Long before Italy entered the war we forecast that entry as the inevitable result of Italian fascist dependence on nazi Germany. It was not a question of whether Italians liked Germans: Italians do not like Germans. It was not a question of what the Italian people desired. The Italian people were not consulted when Mussolini went into Ethiopia, into Spain, into Albania (on Good Friday)—they would not be consulted when the time came for Mussolini to enter the war on the side of his nazi associate. It was simply that a dictator is not free to break those alliances which serve to uphold his dictatorship. Therefore we knew Italy would enter the war; and from the time she did, we have been very careful not to allow ourselves to hope for a breakdown of Axis unity. The Italian and German governments were united in the drive for power, in the early days of success: they now are united in defense and, perhaps, in a first, cold approach to despair.

Neither nazi nor fascist can change. But under the growing pressure certain permanent national characteristics will tend to become visible to the outside world in the behavior of the troops and of the civilian population. Under the growing pressure the quality of the German and Italian peoples will tend to appear in, or to break through, the rigid framework of their political systems. From time to time, with increasing frequency, even German political acts and Italian political acts will be inspired less by fascist or nazi ideology than by enduring national instinct. More and more often the acts of the governments and those of the army will reflect the quality of the people. (The word "quality" is used here in its precise sense implying neither good nor evil. Wherever the national quality becomes apparent and distinguishable from ideology it must, each time, be described and evaluated.)

A UP dispatch from Bern to the New York *Times* (April 7) furnishes an example of Italian quality breaking through the rules and regulations of Italy's association with Germany. In Grenoble, in Italian occupied France, the Vichy police had rounded up for deportation to Germany some four hundred British and American men. The Italian forces of occupation refused to allow these men to be deported. The same despatch reports that in their zone the Italians have been protecting the Jews.

Such action is not fascist action. It is complex in origin—complex as Italian life is complex. It proceeds partially from national pride, and from the special pride of the army. The Italian army refuses to be the army of the Gestapo. It proceeds also from a sense of compassion, a civilized feeling for measure, an instinctive refusal to think of Americans and British and Jews as living outside a civilized world.

Anyone who has known Italy, who has had Italians for friends, who has known Italian army officers, Italian soldiers, intellectuals and peasants will recognize the action taken by the Italian military authorities in occupied France as proceeding directly from a permanent quality in the Italian people. Such a one will say that here, at last, Italian action answers to the will of the Italian people. This is action characteristic of the Italian people. Here at last the theory, harshness, *prepotenza* of the régime is checked by deeper Italian instinct. Here Italy speaks again and the voice of her people will be heard more clearly with each passing month until—in what will look like defeat—the victory of the Italian people will be achieved.

Why So Ignorant?

THE FIRST FLURRY of patriotic indignation about the seven thousand college freshmen in various sections of the country who did so badly on a New York *Times* American history test was followed by a series of explanations. It was even disclosed that said test was drawn up to show

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exactly what it showed, but this failed to lessen the shock in professional patriot circles. And indeed it is disturbing when both in theory and practice American democratic ideals are in great jeopardy, that the signs are so convincing that Americans really know mighty little about the establishment and hard-won principles of their own country.

There is something to each and every one of the explanations heretofore advanced. The most disquieting is that the students would show up as badly in any other subject; the great proportion of our boys and girls now are going on through high school but they simply are not learning much. Haziness on names and dates can also be traced to fairly newfangled social science courses, where history, geography and civics are all squashed into one course or textbook. The quick rejoinder that the young people really do understand the social, political and other trends of American history will take some proving, but it is true that the subject is more than names and dates and places.

There is one highly ironical slant to the whole ruckus. A number of the D.A.R.'s and others who are today most vocal in voicing their alarm are themselves partially responsible for the situation. Authors and publishers of textbooks have had to be continually on their guard. If any of them so much as suggested that one of our national heroes was not a paragon of all the virtues, at least the rugged ones, patriotic societies would storm the local boards of education with the demand that the offending textbook be thrown out; and woe to the teacher who would hint that our history was not as lily-white as it should be. Our schools have been teaching lifeless, glossed-over history carried through as a baneful duty. One does not have to be a doctor of pedagogy to know that when attention impelled by genuine student interest is lacking, little will result.

Choosing the Weapons Ourselves

MANY YOUNGER HEADS of families are gravely troubled about what lies ahead for their households if the threatened lifting of the ban on drafting fathers (pre-Pearl Harbor) soon takes place. It seems imminent, although General Hershey has been trying to put this off as long as he can and a special provision is to be made in cases where induction of the father would result in the family becoming a public charge. Much would depend on the interpretation of that latter phrase. It may well mean that the wife will have to take a job. The fact that large-scale plans for government day nurseries are already in the completion stage would seem to indicate many more working mothers. The greatest sacrifice would be exacted of families of this type. And families that are slightly better off usually have obligations that cannot be met by anything like the current government benefits of $50 per month for the wife and approximately $10 adidtional for each child.

Wars like this one cannot be won without the heaviest personal sacrifices. But there is something about the spectacle of mothers being separated from their children at the most helpless and formative stages that is of far greater national importance than any individual hardship. The well-being of the American family is the basic objective of the struggle for the four freedoms and national security. The rise in juvenile delinquency that makes such sorry reading in our daily papers is only one indication as to what is happening to the family under the present dispensation. The results of further loosening of family ties are only too easy to foresee.

Is there any alternative? One possibility is a more adequate schedule of family allowances so that in these disturbed times mothers can remain at home to carry on their most important function for the nation. This means not only a higher basic rate, but a higher scale for younger, unemployable children. With the numbers contemplated for our armed forces, this might raise the question of government capacity to pay even in these days of apparently limitless billions.

There is, perhaps, a better way. No one has satisfactorily explained why we need an 11,000,000-man army. Germany's new *Festung-Europa* concept and her desire to make this a war of attrition (see the current *Reader's Digest*) calls for new Allied methods. An army of 6,000,000 of our most able-bodied men, and *fully* mechanized, would not only provide a greater striking force, but it would enable us to utilize our vastly superior productive powers to their capacity, with less dangerous strain on the national economy. The importance of fighting the Axis with our, rather than their, best weapons cannot be overemphasized. Under this plan the families where fathers were drafted would be so many fewer that there could be no question as to their being adequately supported. That this would be the most efficient use of our tremendous material and human resources is no lone opinion of our own; it is vouched for by many competent men. There is still time.

N.B.

NEW YORK, April 6: Howard E. Kerschner, of the Society of Friends and director of the International Commission for the Assistance of Child Refugees, told a meeting called by the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies: "Everything is in order—the money, the food and the ships, with supervision for the distribution. All that is needed is the official permission of Washington and London to do it. What you can do to help persuade Washington that it ought to be done is to write to the President, write to both

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your Senator and your Congressman. You can say that Senate Resolution 100 and House Resolution 117, which advocate food for the children of occupied countries, ought to be supported."

Politics and Food

THE current *Nation* in an editorial entitled "Much Ado About Food" wishes that the press had given more space "to a sober analysis of the basic facts . . . For the facts would have shown that despite a few bad spots the basic food situation of the country at the present time is excellent." A friendly correspondent in the Department of Agriculture writes us, "I do not believe that we are faced with a serious food shortage."

These two views reflect about the only opposition to what was said last week in our editorial, "America's Daily Bread." Next week we shall print some of the many comments we have received, most of them in general agreeing with us.

Naturally every American must hope that the view expressed by the *Nation* and by our anonymous correspondent in Washington is correct. Let us hope that Providence will be kind to us another year, that the weather will be exceptionally favorable, that all the most optimistic forecasts will be fulfilled. Yet what the *Nation* calls "the basic facts" seem obviously drawn from a release (March 20, 1943) of the Department of Agriculture which when carefully read gives you pause. Here is the gist of this report: "The Crop Reporting Board says that on the basis of average yield, crop yields are likely to be about 12 percent below the exceptionally high record set last year and aggregate crop production about 9 percent below last year's output. However, total food production probably will be somewhat larger than last year because of the large increase expected in livestock production."

Bear in mind that during 1943 the armed forces are to be greatly increased in size. Bear in mind that these men eat more than an equivalent group in civilian life. Obviously we shall have no more food available for civilian consumption than we have had in recent months. And it is quite possible that we shall have less. The President himself, in vetoing the Bankhead Bill, drew no particularly happy picture. "We must adopt simple wartime standards. If we do, none of us need want for the real necessities of life. [Elsewhere he describes this as an 'irreducible' minimum for civilians.] We can all have enough if we do not try to get too much. We can only make sure that the present balance does not change materially for the worse; and that those on the lower rungs of the economic ladder are not ground down below the margin of existence. Further we cannot go during the war."

In this whole food situation there are two political problems which we must understand, or we shall understand nothing. The American Labor Party, in commending the President's veto, pointed out that the Bankhead Bill was designed to further the interests of big farmers. We ourselves have said as much about the Cannon Resolution and the Pace Bill. We have pointed to the fact that under pressure from big farmers an increase has been allowed in tobacco and short-staple cotton acreage which could far better be planted to other crops. This increase also plays into the hands of big farmers.

It happens that thanks to the outcome of last fall's elections the balance of power in both Houses of Congress lies with Southern Democrats, who represent big farm interests and are of one mind with such reactionary groups as the Farm Bureau Federation. In vetoing the Bankhead Bill the President has for the first time since last summer defied that branch of his party, which has the power to obstruct his other policies in Congress. His action is most courageous and praiseworthy. Perhaps the only real solution would be for a bloc of Republicans to form, with a view to nullifying Democrats more reactionary than are these same Republicans themselves.

So much for the internal politics. What is more important for the future welfare of all human beings is the international political aspect of the matter. Supposing that with luck Americans do have the "real necessities of life" for the duration. That is simply not enough as an agricultural goal for this country. Because, the minute we are able and free to assume the task of relieving stark famine in Europe and Asia, we must be in a position to do so. If we are not, we shall face an embittered world, which had placed its hope and confidence in us, and which will have been deceived.

In other words, we need more than we need. Any agricultural policy which is designed merely to fulfill the requirements of our own civilian and military population and the small though important shipments on Lend-Lease is a criminally insufficient policy. Rather than arguing as to whether we ourselves shall get by, or whether we shall have to pull in our belts a little, what we should do is face the fact that we shall have to pull in our belts, and at the same time insist that we must build up all the surpluses we can for use after the cessation of hostilities.

The "farm bloc" (the term is a misnomer, since the thing represents only a fraction of the farmers) by continuing its present attitude therefore not only endangers the adequacy of our own food supply, not only threatens to destroy one of the best agencies the New Deal ever created—the Farm Security Administration—but also, and most serious of all, threatens the peace to follow this war.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

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Not Anything Is Glad

Not anything is glad
The earth smells bitter
The snow falls acid
The spring bubbles black

Leaves wear thorns
Buds hide hooks
Trunks are hairy
Branches whip

The meadow grows dung
Honey is slime
Birds are diseased
Buttercups mold

The cow is bloated
The goat is strangled
The mule is blinded
The fish is wormed

The pumpkin is shriveled
The corn is blighted
The hay is rotted
The wheat is rusted

The net is tangled
The boat is ripped
The oar is shattered
The sea is thick

His house was broken
His blood ran red
His last word is spoken
My love is dead.

CAROL ELY HARPER.

March Hills

In the dark lounging length of these gloomed hills
Dreams the serene fragility of Spring.
In casual intervales, by falling rills
Rinsed and made fruitful, shall the bluebell swing.
Compulsion of the sun and solving snows
Shall make these olden valleys shoulder high
The single daisy and the numerous rose,
In grots where bowed November crept to die.
There, where as yet prevails no voice of Spring,
Shall the enfolding air at morning-bloom
Split to the silver spears that robins sling
One after other down the low blue gloom.

These things I know, their fountain know and trust.
Is it not God that breathes the robin's flight,
Calls back the antique daisy from the dust,
And lifts my feet with love along the height?
Over these soaking hills some azure morn
Will blow His cool imperial words and sweet:
Grown of the ground, let flash the flowering thorn,
To ring the robin's cold exploring feet . . .

And feet of men that work from hill to hill,
Drawn by desire of every melting height,
When Spring and longing loose the dreamy will,
And God is found the core of all delight.

JOHN DUFFY, C.SS.R.

It Was New England

It was New England, I was brought up right,
I was sent to bed to save the light,
And so I first began to make my mark
By getting on the good side of the dark.

When aunts had put my lamp out, I would follow
The twinkling wings on every dusky swallow
As he rose over climbing night away
In the deep sky and drank the last of day.

As dark came through the panes, I saw much clearer,
Being so much awake. The stars came nearer,
And suddenly all things I loved and knew
Were bright as grass at sunrise in the dew.

I did not have to turn my wakeful head,
The slender deer were going past my bed,
The boy I loved so much, now fast asleep,
Was on my back and shoulders at one leap.

He and the deer were friends and never slept,
No matter where I was, they came and kept
Watch over me. The boy was not the one
I knew by day who left his things undone.

He was not careless of his hands and hair,
As he and I were when the light was there,
He was clean and shining as a whistle,
He was all spines and blossoms like the thistle.

My father came to see me, being far
Away in town below the evening star,
And he was not my handsome heavy sire
But tall and slender as an evening fire.

He leaned over me, I saw the small
Play and work I had were a high wall
Building up to shut out dead cold space,
My sons were there, they had my father's face.

I looked and saw my saving aunts were not
The bringers of the darkness as I thought
But watched me like sharp seraphs winged with light,
And I was on the right side of the night.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.

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Shadows at Dusk

It is not too easy wherever you go.

***By* Jesse Stuart**

CUSTER BOWLING pulled a big handful of shoemake leaves where the night dew hadn't reached them and rubbed them over his bony face to erase the streams of sweat that were getting into his eyes. Sweat always smarted his eyes. Warm sweat made his eyeballs sting and smart. The leaves had a good smell and he liked to use them for a handkerchief since his bandanna was wet as sweat could make it. He always got hot when he climbed the Raccoon Mountain. It took a man with good wind to climb to the top without stopping as he had always done.

Custer untied the buckskin shoe string and unhooked it from around the hooks on the top of his brogan shoe; then he loosened the buckskin in the eyes below the hooks and pulled the shoe from his sockless foot. He put his big sled-runner shaped foot back against the damp earth and his foot felt good. That foot was relieved. Now he would relieve the other foot while his hot body cooled and the sweat dried on his face. While he untied the buckskin string, he heard a parrot-owl laughing in the oaktop behind him. He heard a whippoorwill call among the shoemake bushes to its mate across the valley. Now he had the other shoe off; what a relief to his feet that had been cramped in shoes all day. Sweat streams had stopped trickling his body too; especially the three streams that came from the lines along his steep forehead.

Custer held his broken shoes in one hand, with the other hand he slapped his hip pockets to see if his letter was still there. It was; he felt it. And he was glad. He must hold to that letter even if he lost his shoes. He had the buckskin strings of each shoe tied together and his left index finger hooked under the string. They couldn't get away. If he dropped them, they'd be hard to find along the path under the trees where the moonlight and starlight couldn't penetrate. But Custer had been over this mountain path so much he could feel the path, every spot of sand, tree-root and tuft of sedgegrass. His bare feet and toes could feel same as his hands and fingers. He had learned to feel with his feet walking along mountain paths on moonless nights too dark to see his hand before him.

Soon as Custer reached his shack that was sprawled in the valley moonlight, the lazy hound dog barked from the porch. Custer spoke loud enough for the dog to hear, but not loud enough to wake his mother and father. The hound dog walked slowly across the yard to greet him, whined and wagged his tail, then went back to the front porch. Custer walked around the house to the back porch and dipped water from the wooden bucket into the washpan. He put one foot in the washpan for one foot was all he could get in the pan at a time. His heel set squarely against the side of the pan while his toes clinched over the pan's rim. Awfully big feet and the skin was tough on them. It was tough and thick as hickory bark. Lye-soap his mother had made from chittlings and wood ashes didn't smart his feet. It cut the dirt off down to the pink hard flesh. Clean feet feeling the clean sheets his mother put on his bed upstairs always made him go to sleep. Soon as he had washed both feet, he put the gourd of lye-soap back on the kitchen window sill. He threw the water from the pan into the kitchen yard and placed the pan on the kitchen table. Slowly, he eased the kitchen door open and slipped upstairs to bed.

As he lay jackknifed on his bed upstairs, he heard his mother's and father's snores coming from the room below. But it wasn't the snores that kept him awake. He was so wide awake he could hear their lazy hound dog, Jeff, snoring on the front porch while a red fox barked from a bony finger of Raccoon Mountain. But the noises didn't keep him awake. He thought about the letter in his overalls pocket. The noises he heard gradually faded as he went to sleep thinking about what the letter would mean to him, the places it would take him, the people he would meet—beyond, beyond, the rim of mountains that had enclosed him all his life.

"Roll out Cus," he heard his father's commanding voice. "Breakfast is ready!"

That meant to get out of bed. Getting up at 5:45 wouldn't bother him any place he went, he thought, since four o'clock had always been getting up time at his home. He wasn't hard to wake; his father had taught him that. When he yelled for him, he knew to roll out. But it seemed that this had been a short night of sleep as he rubbed his eyes with his big knuckles to get them open. He dressed and hurried down to breakfast.

"Get to the dabbling pan, Son," his mother told him.

She sat down at the table at her regular place. It was the end of the table near the stove where she could jump up and pour hot coffee and take hot biscuits from the pan. This had been her place at the table since Custer could remember, probably long before he could remember since he was the tenth child and the only one left at home.

"We're waiting on you, Cus," Burbie Bowling said as lifted a piece of country ham on the end of his knife to his beard enclosed mouth. "Waiting on you like we allus do when you don't roll out on time."

Burbie laughed as he shifted his mouthful of food from one side of his mouth to the other, placing it on his good teeth so he could chew it better. Then he sopped half a hot biscuit into the ham gravy and lifted it to his mouth with his fingers and his blunt thumb.

"I see you're waiting on me, Pap," Custer said pouring cold water from the wooden bucket into the wash pan.

Custer dipped lye-soap from the gourd, rubbed it over his face. It filled the hollows over his tight-shut eyes like axle-grease fills a jolt-wagon hub. Custer dipped

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cold water from the pan to his face, pressing the oozing dripping water against the soap and the soap against his tough leathery sun-tanned face. He washed the soap away, reached up to the roller with his eyes still closed and found the meal-sack hand-towel. He dried his face; then sat down at the end of the table facing his mother. He had eaten in this place ever since he could remember.

"Ye'll finish plowing the corn today," Burbie said, "and I'll cut terbacker sticks. Think ye can get it done today?"

"Hope I can," Custer said. "I've got a new job to do."

"Did ye git a job in town yesterday, Cus?" his mother asked as she sat her saucer of cooling coffee on the table. It was too hot for her tongue.

"Yep, I got a job, Ma," he said.

"What kind of work, Cus?" Burbie asked his shagggy eye-brows working as his lips moved, his gray hawk-eyes had a far-away look in them.

"It's fighting, Pap!"

"What kind of fighting?" Burbie asked holding a saucer of hot-steaming coffee in his big gnarled trembling hand. The coffee was sloshing over the saucer rim onto the oil table cloth that was threadbare in places.

"A fighting for the United States Marines!"

"By Gad, I'm fer it," his father said, dropping his saucer on the table, spilling his coffee and letting it run over the cloth to the floor and down a crack between two broad planks. "I allus did want to fight fer the Marines!"

"But you ain't goin', Cus," Aremithe Bowling said. "Not if I can hep it. I'll haf to sign won't I? You hain't o' age."

"Yes, you'll have to sign, Ma!"

"I won't do it," she said, dropping her knife from her wrinkled hand across her plate. Her deep-lined leathery face turned pale; her lips trembled. "I jist won't do it!"

"But Ma . . . I want . . ."

"Don't keer what ye want! I won't do it!"

"I'll sign yer papers, Cus!"

Aremithe took her last swallow of coffee from her saucer. Her blue dimming eyes looked down at the table as her hand went down to her apron pocket and lifted her pipe to her mouth. With a shaking hand she held the long stem, slowly getting it between her trembling lips. Without speaking, her hand methodically went to her apron pocket and brought up a wisp of bright burley crumbs. Custer watched her put the crumbs in her stone pipe and tamp them with her index finger. She drew the lamp across the table to her with the smoked globe rocking behind the smoked splinters on the burner. She lifted the globe from the burner, catching it down low so it wouldn't burn her fingers; then she held the long-stemmed pipe over the fluttering blaze. When she wheezed on her pipe, the lamp flame caught the dry tobacco crumbs and she blew clouds of smoke from her wrinkled lips.

"Ye're not a-going nary step," she repeated with tight lips, fastening the smoked globe behind the burned splinters.

Custer sat staring at the kitchen wall where there was an assortment of pots, pan, dippers, pot-lids and buckets hanging on rusty nails. And there were long strings of red pepper pods, apples, and leather-britches beans drying on his mother's kitchen wall; his father sat picking his teeth with a goose-quill.

"Cus, let me have yer papers," Burbie said, putting his gose-quill in his pocket. "I'll sign 'em now. Maybe yer Ma'll change 'er mind."

"All right, Pap."

Custer pulled the envelope from his hip pocket, reached it across the table to his father.

"I'll never change my mind," Aremithe said. "I ain't a-signing no death warrant fer my baby boy!"

"Ah, Ma, a baby-boy," Custer repeated bashfully, "I'm one of the biggest men they've examined. Know how tall I am and how much I weigh?"

Aremithe Bowling didn't answer; she smoked fatser than Custer had ever seen her smoke.

"Six feet seven and three-eighths inches tall and I weigh two hundred and sixty-six pounds stripped. The Doctor told me I's the best man he'd examined. You know how I can shoot! You know I never go out unless I bring back game!"

"Your brother, Timothy, was a big boy back in 1917," Aremithe said, "and he could bark a squirrel from the tallest hickory with a rifle; a powerful boy with his fist and he was sound in body and mind as a silver dollar; but he was brought back in a wooden box. I ain't signing yer death warant, Custer!"

"But our country needs 'im, Rem," Burbie said, sliding his chair back from the table. With Custer's envelope in his big fire-shovel hand, he walked from the kitchen to the front room. While he was gone Aremithe didn't look her son in the eye. She looked at the table, smoked her pipe and smoked hard. When Burbie came back he was carrying a short indelible pencil.

"Where do I sign, Cus?" he asked as he laid the paper on the table.

"On this line, Pap," Custer said, putting his finger at the right place.

Custer watched his father write his name, a name that would be hard for any Marine official to decipher.

"Don't bring it to me, Custer!" Aremithe said, "I won't sign it!"

"Let's go, Son," Burbie said, "daylight's burning."

* * *

When Custer left the house, he left his mother staring vacantly at the table. Custer walked across the porch leaving his brogan shoes. Barefooted he walked toward the barn where his father had fed and harnessed the mule before breakfast. As he led the mule from his barn-stall, he saw his father bent by time and hard work walking up the steep mountain slope with his ax across his shoulder.

Custer threw his long leg over Dick's back and rode up the narrow path between two steep mountains. The mule walked in a little creek slashing water upon Custer's feet. The harness jingled as he rode along, thinking about men trained to fight "on land and sea and in the air." This would be a great adventure. But his mother, he thought —what was wrong? Tim was killed in the First World War. But Jim had been killed, too! He was knifed down at a square dance. And Alf Higgin had shot and killed his brother Pert. They had always been fighting the Higginses—men dying on both sides! Wasn't it better that his brother Tim had died in France? Yes, he was killed on the Marne. And when he was found, so the letter read and the newspapers printed, three dead Germans were found near him. Though he had never seen his Brother Tim, he thought he must have been a scrapper.

When Custer reached the rocky mountain slope that his father had corned every year he could remember, he lifted his leg over the mule's back and stepped onto the ground. Then he undid the rusted trace-chains from behind the harness backstraps, hooked them to the single-

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tree, undid his rope plow-lines from around the harness hames and put a zinc bucket with holes punched in the bottom over the mules nose for a muzzle. He stepped between the handles of his double-shovel and slapped the slow-gaited mule's bony rump with the rope line.

Methodically Dick walked between the tall corn rows; methodically Custer walked between the handles of his plow. Ten summers he had plowed this same field with Dick. And he had always loved to plow in this cornfield. He knew where every stump and rock was; all he had to do was walk along, holding the plow handles. This had never been work for him; this had been play. Marines are tough and work hard, he thought, but I can take it.

When he could step on his shadow, it was twelve o'clock. He wrapped the rope lines around the hames and unhooked the trace chains. He noticed that he had plowed higher on this slope than he had ever plowed before in the same length of time. He hadn't been thinking much about corn.

He watered his mule in a deep fern-shaded hole in the mountain stream. He rode him down the narrow gorge to the barn, fed him corn and hay and hurried to the house. His father and mother were sitting at the table. Neither spoke to the other. Custer could tell that his mother had been crying for her eyes were streaked with little red lines. The corners of her eyes looked more wrinkled. Custer talked to his father about how good the corn smelled when the lazy wind rustled its blades. And his father told him about the smell of oak wood when it was split in July. Aremithe Bowling said nothing. She ate very little.

After eating. Burbie went to the mountain to cut tobacco sticks. Custer took his mule up the gorge to the cornfield. That afternoon, he plowed the stalwart rows of corn over for the last time that summer. It was laid by now. And soon as he had finished the last row, he looked over the stubborn slope wondering how it could be corned for fifteen years and still grow good corn. His father had told him once that it was because the ground was rocky and the rocks held moisture for the corn roots. Custer looked at the girdled trees, still standing in the field that would tumble before a puff of wind in the corn-rows. He looked the field over as the mule dragged the double-shovel around the edge of the field, down to the gorge and then down the creek.

And his mule, Dick, he patted on the nose as he put his harness away on a peg in the barn entry. Then he turned him free on the pasture. Dick, though he was a mule, seemed like one of the family to him. He knew Dick and Dick knew him. They had worked together many summers. This touched him so deeply, it brought tears to his eyes.

That evening they finished supper early. Custer and Burbie had eaten heartily of the hot buttered cornbread, the young potatoes, green beans seasoned with a hunk of fat pork, fried ham and gravy and a platter stacked with thick slices of tomatoes. While his mother washed the dishes, he and his father carried their hickory-bark bottomed chairs to the front porch and leaned them against the log wall. They sat facing the road that wound between the two mountain ranges up the narrow valley.

Soon as Aremithe had finished the dishes, she brought her favorite chair to the porch. It had been bottomed when the sap was in the bark and she had sat on it and shaped it for her own use. While Aremithe smoked her pipe, Burbie chewed his home-grown burley leaves and spat amber across the porch onto the yard. Custer sat between his father and mother watching the evening sun go over the mountain rim, leaving a patch of red sky where it had been.

As they sat silently on the porch, each one with his own thought, Pert Calloway walked down the road with his double-bitted ax across his shoulder. He was a tall man but time and hard work had bent his broad shoulders. He didn't look toward the Bowling shack but Aremithe, Custer and Burbie looked at Pert as he slowly walked down the winding jolt-wagon road.

"I remember when Pert Calloway was a man, Custer," Burbie said. "He was nigh as big as you. Straight as a pitchfork handle and powerful as a bull. Look at 'im now! See what time has done fer 'im. He'd a made a Marine to fight on land, sea and in the air! Too much hard work trying to make a living and raise a fambly of twelve in these mountains! You remember what a fine looking young man he was, Rem!"

"Yes, I do, Burbie," she said, looking at Custer.

Before Pert Calloway was out of sight, his son, Lester Calloway, followed him. Lester had a cross-cut saw across his shoulder, a big wooden maul in his hand. His overall pants were tied at his waist with hickory bark, his front teeth were gone where Prentiss Nipp had hit him two years before in the mouth with a rock. His shoulders were round as an apple.

"Less looks old as his father," Custer said. "He couldn't pass for a Marine."

"It would be wonderful if he could, Cus," Burbie said, his beardy face beaming. "Marines could do a lot fer 'im. Make a man outten what will soon be a hulk. Just a-going the same way his father went!"

Aremithe didn't say anything; maybe, she was thinking. She smoked her pipe peacefully while dusk engulfed the narrow valley. Shadows played on the heavy foliaged trees on the mountain side. Fireflies were beginning to light their paths through the dusk.

While they sat in silence each one keeping his thoughts to himself, Porter Martin came up the valley with his boys, Amos and Andrew. Amos carried a coalpick with his good hand and he swung his handless arm at his side. He had lost his hand in an explosion in the mine. Andrew limped on the foot he had lost when he first went to work in the coal mine. Porter Martin was stooped by a lifetime spent mining coal from under a Kentucky mountain.

"Porter ain't a man no more," Burbie said, as they passed from twilight into the dusk. "But he's as good a man as his boys at that. They are shadows of men. He won't haf to worry about Uncle Sam ataking his boys!"

Aremithe stopped smoking her pipe to look at Custer.

"They couldn't get into the Marines if they wanted to," Custer said, turning to his father. "I'll bet they'd like to go."

"Heard Andrew tried to enlist but was turned down over jist having half of one foot," Burbie said.

"If I lose a hand or a foot," Custer said, "I'd rather lose it fighting for my country as to lose it mining coal!"

"You're right,Cus; I've allus felt that way about it!"

"If I'm to die, I'd rather be killed on the battlefield than to be smothered to death under fallen-slate in a coal mine!"

"Right."

"And there's nothing here after the crop's laid by but

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coal mining, timber-cutting and ginsanging," Custer said. "Sang's all dug from the mountains. Best job a body can find is coal mining."

Aremithe wheezed softly on her pipe.

"I'm just sitting here a-thinking how good a Marine looks in his uniform," Burbie said. "You'd make a Marine, Cus. You'd look grand. You're big and you're straight as a poplar sapling. You'd look wonderful!"

"I'd love it, Pap. No coal mine to crawl under then."

"Right."

"You wouldn't be a shadow of a man either."

"Custer," Aremithe said, "I've been a-sitting here a-thinking it over as I've watched the boys pass the road. I've changed my mind. Bring me yer paper to sign. It's better to die fer your country than to die under a mountain or be knifed at a square dance or shot by a Higgins. Thar's more glory in dying fer your country! The men soon break here. The mountains break 'em. I'll sign yer papers."

"I knowed you would, Rem," Burbie said softly to her, "atter you though it over. It's the right thing fer 'im to do, fight fer his country!"

"Ma, it's wonderful," Custer said, getting up from his chair, "I'll go into the kitchen and light the lamp so you can see! Then I'll wash my feet and get to bed. I want a night of sleep so I can go early in the mornin'."

Burbie and Aremithe got up from their chairs slowly, walked through the front room toward the lamp-lighted kitchen where Custer had his finger on the line where his mother was to sign.

Men Still Think

Reflections of a British Army Lecturer.

By **J. L. Benvenisti**

IN a moment of inadvertence, or possibly of despair, or acting, perhaps, on the Frederickian principle that if the soldier's life is made sufficiently unbearable he will welcome death in battle as a release, the War Office has recently asked me to go round and lecture to the troops.

It has been a remarkable and altogether delightful experience. For the moment, though I have been considerably further a-field, my work seems to be chiefly among the search-light and anti-aircraft defences round London, and for this reason I am seeing a great deal of so-called mixed units in which men and girls are working together, and working together, from what I can see, extraordinarily happily and well. You are still, I believe, at the beginning of this experience in America, but we are now seasoned to it.

Meeting and dealing with these women soldiers is at times a little disconcerting to me. This, for instance, is the kind of thing that happens. I am asked to visit a particular Anti-Aircraft site, and after some difficulty (directions by telephone are generally refused) contrive to get there. A girl sentry challenges me and takes me to the guard room. I invariably have the feeling at this stage that I am dealing with a jiu-jitsu expert, and that one false move on my part would result in consequences to myself too horrible to be described. In the guard-room are more jiu-jitsu experts, drinking tea or lying on their cots. They eye me with aversion. Then somebody thinks that Sergeant Jones or Sergeant Jenkins had been telephoned for, and it is when Sergeant Jones arrives that my awkward moment comes.

Sergeant Jones (or Jenkins) is, as often as not, a very sweet and charming girl. She greets me with great courtesy and friendliness and shakes hands, and it is at this stage that I go all of a dither, because I am confronted with a problem to which I have not yet found the answer. *Do I or do I not take off my hat?*

There stands Sergeant Jones before me in battle dress, often dirty from doing some job on the guns, though still extremely feminine and pleasing. She has claimed, and (God knows) won, complete equality of status. She is doing a man's job and facing a man's risks. Have gestures of chivalry any longer a meaning when the whole notion of feminine weakness has become an absurdity?

Then another thought begins to worry me. I did not take off my hat to Private Smith, the sentry, because it never occurred to me to treat her differently from any other soldier. Is then the instinctive movement of my right arm due to the fact that Sergeant Jones is obviously what we call a lady, and if so, what sort of a war is this anyway and isn't battle dress supposed to wipe out all distinctions of that kind? I begin to wish most heartily that I was in Russia, where, no doubt, problems like this have been solved long ago, and the business of hat lifting condemned as unproletarian—or has it?

However, whatever may be my own embarrassment with Sergeant Jones, there is no sort of embarrassment in the officers mess. The relation between the men and women officers is an altogether charming one. I am still young enough, to be mildly attracted by these extremely pleasant young

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women in soldier's attire, and old enough to be mildly envious of the very jolly camaraderie between the sexes. The absurdity of calling a female brother officer (sister officer?) by her surname, or the obvious impropriety of speaking to her as Miss So and So, has been got over very simply. Everybody calls everybody else by their Christian names.

There is something that fascinates me tremendously about all this. Perhaps it is that Rosalind has always been my favorite Shakesperian character, and Rosalind seems to be very much in evidence on the London anti-aircraft defences—with only this reservation, and it is a very important one, that the modern Rosalind is not in the least likely to faint at the sight of blood.

I want to make this point very clear. Women in Britain are showing the martial virtues in exactly the same degree as men. They expose themselves to the same risks and display the same intrepidity. The only difference between women and men in this respect is one of muscular strength. Indeed my general impression from talking with my local Air Raid Warden seems to be that, if anything, there were, during the great Blitz, more examples of conspicuous coolness and gallantry among women than there were among men—and there was, I assure you, plenty of coolness and gallantry among men.

However, lest it be thought that the life of a lecturer leads to nothing more than the ecstatic contemplation of the feminine soul, let me explain that there are also some men in the British Army and that even these forlorn and superfluous creatures occasionally show signs of having some brains.

* * *

Actually when I describe myself as a lecturer, I am giving a very inaccurate description. My chief job is to arouse interest and provoke discussion and my work really dovetails into that of the Army Bureau of Current Affairs which I dealt with in a previous article. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this gigantic experiment in adult education. What it amounts to is that millions of men, the most vital and energetic section of the community, is suddenly being made to sit down and begin thinking about themselves, their place in society and the general potentialities of the present and post-war set up. The ultimate political and sociological effect of this will be enormous. It will also ultimately be highly explosive.

In a sense the most valuable products of the present activity will be its failures, for it is from these failures that we can learn. The main purpose behind the present effort is to try and make men participate mentally in the acts of the government. Indeed what British Army Education is really trying to achieve is a very full and exalted type of Democracy. The ideal that the men behind it seem to be aiming at is a state of society in which the initiative comes more and more from below, where the government becomes more and more the mere agent of the informed and purposive decisions of the people, a state in which the people not only know what they want, but how the thing they want may be obtained, and in which they obtain it for that reason. I really think there is a conscious effort striving in this direction.

But we are still a very long way from that goal and it is no good deluding ourselves that we are not. The fact is that it is occasionally difficult to instil the indispensable habit of intellectual aggressiveness and curiosity into a man of twenty or thirty if that habit has never previously been cultivated. There is always a tendency in some men to look upon it as the duty of the fellow at the top to worry things out. All they have to do —that seems to be the notion—is to accept (or vilify) the result.

I have had this brought most distressingly home to me when I have spoken, as I have been doing frequently of late, on the Beveridge Report with its proposed minimum of £2 a week per couple for the unemployed, the disabled and the sick. When I address a large audience there will always be a man who gets up and says "What's the good of £2 a week to two people?" in a tone that somehow seems to suggest that it is my own personal mean-spiritedness that is somehow at the bottom of the matter. I always tell my audience that this type of man is the enemy of Democracy and so indeed of the whole human race. He will *not* sit down and study the problem of ways and means. He will *not* study estimates of the national income, of productivity and the rest. All he can do is to stand and sneer. Mind you, I agree with him that £2 a week for a married couple (8 dollars in your money) does not constitute freedom from want. But he has got the wrong approach to the matter for all that, and I do not hesitate to tell him so.

I do not scruple to write like this because this type of man is not peculiarly British; he is a world-wide phenomenon among all the democracies and I have no doubt that you are afflicted with him quite as damnably as we are. Indeed I am beginning to wonder whether we are not all of us shouting a little too uncritically about the common man coming into his heritage, as though he could—or should—be handed that heritage on a platter.

I am an ardent believer in human equality. I am as good a Jeffersonian as any American, but I do not interpret that doctrine (and I don't think its author did either) as implying that all men are entitled to free ham-and-eggs simply by virtue of being born, or that men can either claim or exercise the privileges of full self-government, and

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all the material benefits that can ultimately be derived from that, without intellectual labor and intellectual discipline. I do sincerely believe that all men are equal not only in value (which is a matter of faith) but in intellectual potentiality (which is a matter of observation). I believe in this connection, incidentally, that inter-racial differences have been very much over-estimated. But I certainly do not believe that failure to realize that potentiality, whether the fault be of the individual or of society, just doesn't matter.

But despite all the difficulties and shortcomings I have indicated, this huge undertaking of British Army Education is having its effect. In a fumbling kind of way and with sweat and agony at the unwonted labor, millions of people are thinking themselves down to fundamentals, are puzzling out a great many questions, in particular such matters as the true end of economic activity, and that is making all those things that Lord Keynes has so aptly called the "Humbug of Finance" increasingly impossible. Whether you attach some opprobrious label to such an attitude or not, you have got to put up with the fact that unemployment—any unemployment that is avoidable by any kind of ingenuity, manipulation or bureaucratic *force majeure*—simply will not be tolerated after this war, and that there is on this matter a complete identity of outlook between officers and men. I must during the last six months have been in the best part of a hundred officers' messes and discussed all manner of post-war problems with them. Never once did I hear any kind of suggestion for trusting the "old proven methods" or anything of that sort. Whatever post-war set-up we devise it will have to achieve certain modest but clear ends, it will have to make a certain minimum of sense.

There are some who seem to believe that we are moving towards some kind of collectivism. But if that is so, the energizing factor will be not a desire for a better distribution of material goods, but rather the avoidance of waste and frustration and the desire to give play to intelligent human motive.

It is this that is behind young Sir Richard Acland's important and growing Commonwealth Movement which is working for common ownership of the great industrial resources. Acland's quarrel with capitalism is precisely that it enforces a corrupt and unnatural play of motive. As a more exalted authority has put the matter, "man's one solicitude is to obtain his daily bread in any way he can—and so bodily labor, which was decreed by Providence for the good of man's body and soul even after original sin, has everywhere been changed into an instrument of strange perversion: for dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed where men are corrupted and degraded."

If in a society the profit motive is the only accepted determinant (and with industrial resources privately held Acland cannot conceive of any other being operative) that society is, of course, bound to develop in this way. Acland is not such a fool as to say that any business man endeavoring to maximise profit is an exploiter actuated by greed, but he does say that the repercussions on the great mass of wage earners of such a way of acting, a way which mere considerations of survival often make compulsory, is spiritually destructive to all concerned.

The result of the capitalist getting as much as he can is, by and large, that the worker will combine with his fellows to give as little as he can. Indeed, in certain industries the thing is—or was—already as obvious as the noonday sun. If the worker's output exceeds a certain amount per hour, then it will obviously pay the employer to employ fewer workers, and in a properly functioning economy, unless the increased output could immediately be marketed it would be quite right to employ fewer workers. But then a properly functioning economy would either immediately create the market, or would find the displaced worker useful and productive work to do elsewhere. But while it works under the profit rule that is what our society cannot do.

Now Acland's main contention is that such a system not only creates scarcity but that it works against the ordinary instinct of service that is in every healthy man. It is for this reason against nature and, so, destructive of the soul. It deprives work of its ability to become an expression of brotherly service and brotherly love. In a word, Acland is fighting quite literally for men's right to work, not in the restricted sense of a right to a job, but in the most literal sense that the words can be made to bear, namely the right to serve and give of one's best.

Acland's Movement is achieving a steadily increasing political strength particularly among the blackcoated and among professing Christians. The latter fact should give food for thought.

* * *

It is, perhaps, not sufficiently realized that it is this desire for purposive, collective and fraternal team-work that is really generating the incredible enthusiasm for the Beveridge Plan. The Beveridge Plan is not a scheme for providing millions of men with doles and shovelling out money for doing nothing. The source of its popularity is its implication of full employment without which indeed the whole scheme becomes unworkable, for what the British people want is work, the opportunity of providing not only for themselves but—this is the important point—for each other. They realize perfectly well by now that there is no hidden well of wealth which will provide a universal dividend of free fried chicken and I do not

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think they would be violently excited about it if there were. You do not understand what is happening in Britain until you realize that all this excitement has centered quite as much on the right to give as on the right to receive.

A cardinal point in this connection was made by a very young Member of Parliament, a young Conservative, Captain Quintin Hogg. In answer to the doubts expressed by some that the stringency of our probable post-war position might make the scheme difficult to apply, Captain Quintin Hogg pointed out that if times were difficult then that was all the more reason for equality of sacrifice. The fact that Captain Quintin Hogg's admittedly admirable speech obtained more publicity and created almost more stir than that of any other Member is to my mind a fact of intense significance.

But the direction in which we are driving was made plain to me in yet another particular by an experiment which I made when I was lecturing on the Beveridge Plan. Sir William Beveridge himself points out that his scheme could be financed equally well by a flat rate contribution, or out of taxes. In the latter case, of course, the finance would tend to come rather more from the well-to-do. Now, on three occasions I made it my business to explain the pros and cons of either method and then ask my audience to show which they preferred by their vote. All three audiences voted for the flat rate method, one unanimously and two by a four to one majority. You can make as much or as little of that as you please, but if you say that we are moving towards collectivism I say that you have here present and operative a deep rooted British (and I think American), element which no formulator of any collectivist Utopia has so far bothered ever to take into his calculations. The British, it is true, want security, but they also want to feel that they are paying for it and to establish towards the benefits which they wish to secure the same moral and legal title which a man acquires to a packet of cigarettes when he has put the necessary money on the counter. Do let us avoid labels. If this is socialism, collectivism or any other related ism that is known to man, then I am the Emperor of China.

I started this letter by telling you something of my work in connection with Army Education. I once heard that we army lecturers are the British counterpart of the political commissars. That is a very misleading picture. Our job is not to educate in a political philosophy, but rather to try and give expression to what is latent in our audiences and in doing that we learn almost as much as we teach. There is something working up from among the people of Britain to which I cannot as yet fully give a name. I can only say that it will refuse to conform to any textbook model.

The Dail and the Druids*

By E. V. R. WYATT

DURING those tense years after the first World War which saw the climax of Ireland's struggle for independence, two Irish leaders kept aloof from the bitterness of fratricidal politics. Each had his own mystical Gaelic cosmogony; to both Cuchulain was a more realistic figure than a Viceroy; and both of them, brought up in the Protestant tradition with a traditional distrust of Rome, discovered provender for their spiritual hunger in the esoteric menu dished out by the Theosophical Society. It was the heyday of Mme. Blavatsky, purveyor of occult wisdom with claptrap trimmings. Her séances attracted an extraordinary number of intelligent persons including Maeterlinck and Sir William Crookes, the eminent chemist. D. H. Lawrence ricochetted from a Congregational upbringing through Animism and Blavatsky to Primitivism, with himself as a Messianic hero. Her shadowy salons also had a fascination for William Yeats and A.E. (Russell). She averred to Yeats that she was only an old Russian peasant but he always believed in her honesty although she remained to him "a note of interrogation." Long afterwards, A.E. asserted that "No one ever affected the thought of so many able men and women by 'hocus pocus'."

A volume on "Esoteric Buddhism" by A. P. Sinnett, passed about and discussed in Edward Dowden's house in 1885, had created a curiosity about theosophy among the younger literary men in Dublin. Yeats and William Johnstone organized the Hermetic Society and, after a visit to Mme. Blavatsky in London, Johnstone founded a Lodge of the Theosophical Society in Ely Place, Dublin, where he and A.E. and some fellow disciples lived in a semi-monastic way together; their ideal of celibacy receiving a rude shock, however, when Johnstone married Mme. Blavatsky's daughter. Yeats, meanwhile, had joined the London Lodge but before they invited him to resign for practicing "experiments," he had already been initiated into the Order of the Golden Dawn where he was encouraged to cultivate magic. The Order was a form of Christian Cabalism founded by McGregor Mathers, an Englishman who assumed the name McGregor and shrouded both his origin and his rituals in mystery.

*The "Life of W. B. Yeats" by Joseph Hone (Macmillan. $6.00) which prompted this discussion is a treasure house of valuable material whose very quantity may discourage some readers. It also preserves a lively picture of J. B. Yeats, the father, an artist, with a personality not to be overshadowed even by his son, whose career he continually prodded with lively criticism and suggestion. Mr. J. B. Yeats will always be remembered with affection by those New Yorkers who were fortunate enough to know him during his thirteen-year visit—a sojourn which always perplexed his Willy. Mrs. Yeats gave Mr. Hone access to all her husband's papers and Mr. Hone has written of his old friend with loyal discernment and a fine impartiality and tolerance for contemporary politics. The 500 pages of this documentary record will undoubtedly be an invaluable foundation for succeeding studies of the poet whose Gaelic genius gave new wings to English poetry.

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Mathers married a pretty clairvoyante, a sister of Henri Bergson—but Bergson remained indifferent to his brother-in-law's incantations. "I have shown him all that magic can do," said Mathers, "and it has had no effect upon him." Yeats was more credulous. He stayed in the Order for twelve years until Mathers's pretensions became preposterous and then joined a new Order, the Stella Matutina, but always believed that Mathers died from the spell laid on him by a rival magician.

How this flow of Eastern occultism became transmuted into a trancendental form of Gaelic nationalism is a curious phase of the Irish revolution. By the Nineteenth Century, the Gaelic language had been relegated to the peasantry. It was Standish O'Grady in his "Bardic History of Ireland," published in 1875, who opened the eyes of his generation to the grandeur of the ancient myths. "How pallid, beside the ruddy chivalry who pass, huge and fleet and bright, through O'Grady's pages," explained A.E., "appear Tennyson's bloodless knights of the Round Table." In the nineties came the Irish Literary Society and the Gaelic League of Douglas Hyde. The influence wielded by the "Bardic History" was once brought home to O'Grady in a picturesque way. "Meg!" he cried to his wife, "I heard today on the esplanade of Bray, a young man glorifying the ancient gods of Ireland!" It was no other than Russell, who in an outburst of enthusiasm, had suddenly leapt upon the seawall one Sunday afternoon to recall to the good citizens strolling along the quay the glories of their heroic national past.

* * *

A.E. began to believe that the greatest evil one nation can inflict on another was to cut off from it the story of the national soul. "Dear Irish boy, dear Irish girl, I know as well as any the economic needs of our people. They must not be overlooked but keep in your souls some images of magnificence." Full of his Hindu studies, he became convinced that the Mother Earth of Eire was the repository of Druidic wisdom and even went so far as to experiment with an American Theosophist in "psychometrizing" certain hillsides which were supposedly ancient centers of magic to uncover their secrets and awake their "Earth mysteries." For years, A.E. instructed the members of the Hermetic Society every Thursday night in esoteric philosophy, linking the Aryan with the Druid gods. His active life, however, was spent in the eminently practical work of disseminating the principles and practice of agrarian cooperation under the leadership of Sir Horace Plunkett. Russell edited *The Irish Homestead* until it was merged with *The Irish Statesman*. A strange undercurrent of Hindu mysticism and literary wisdom ran through its excellent counsel on rural banks and cattle but Russell acquired both readers and an international reputation as an editor. He also acquired his sobriquet of AE* through a compositor's puzzlement over an article signed "AEon." Its timelessness made the word dear to him. He sympathized with Plunkett's idea of less politics and better crops for the suffering countryside. Politics, indeed, played so small a part in his life that his friend Eglinton believes that the "transmigration" of Mme. Blavatsky in 1891 was of far more importance to Russell than the death of Parnell.

As a boy in Sligo, Yeats had listened to many old tales and like AE his enthusiasm was mounting over the Gaelic myths. His first narrative poem, published in 1888, through the exertions of a literary minded patriot, was "The Wanderings of Oisin," a dialogue between Saint Patrick and the bard Ossian—already publicized by Macpherson—who returned unregenerate from fairyland. "You write my kind of poetry," quoth William Morris as he bumped into the young poet on the Strand. But of far more import to Willie was the day that same spring when a hansom drew up before his father's house in London and a tall girl, whose beauty had already illumined several capitals, alighted to seek out the author of "Oisin." It was Maude Gonne, the orphan of an English Colonel who had died in Dublin, leaving his two beautiful daughters a generous patrimony. Maude, turning from Castle society to the stage, had but recently dedicated her life to the cause of Irish freedom, a vow to which she was wholly faithful. Her surpassing loveliness entered the poet's marrow. For years, she inspired his verse and her image always retained for him a supernatural aura: "She had a bright look as if she had gazed into the burning sun." Not long before Yeats's death, he wrote to Sir William Rothenstein begging him to make a drawing of Maude, adding "just now her looks are magnificent." Wherever she travelled, this goddess carried with her innumerable singing birds in cages. Once a great hawk.

> "There was an element in her beauty," wrote Yeats, "which moved minds full of old Gaelic stories and poems for she looked as though she lived in an ancient civilization where all superiorities were a part of public ceremonial—her whole body seemed as if a Scopas had consorted with Egyptian sages or mathematicians out of Babylon that he might outface Artemisia's image."

To proposals of marriage, the lovely Maude remained obdurate; she shared Yeats's passionate patriotism but knew his disinclination to violence. She, herself, went so far as to try to induce a Boer agent in Brussels to assist her in a plot to place bombs among the coal of a British transport. "Give up this life of hatred," pleaded Yeats who was then working out a ritual for an Order of Celtic Mysteries. He confided to Maude his dream for making Ireland a Holy Land for its people and of a Castle of Heroes on Lough Key in Roscommon where initiates in the Celtic Mysteries might retire. Politics to him were transitory and painful phenomena which he suffered at times for his love but he also had recourse to magic and practised some "symbols" with Miss Gonne who had passed through four initiations in the Order of the Golden Dawn. When she resigned from the Order, it was not from scepticism but because she felt it savoured too much of Freemasonry which she considered the backbone of the British Empire. Indeed, such was her confidence in Yeats's occult powers that she asked him once in Westminster Abbey if he could not spirit away by magic to the Castle

*At first Russell signed himself AE but later A.E.

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of the Heroes the Druidic stone under the Coronation Chair—since it seemed heavy to steal!

In 1903, Maude Gonne married in Paris a Major MacBride, an exiled Irishman who had fought against the British with the Boers. They lived together but a short time and MacBride was executed in Dublin in 1916 after the Easter Rising. It was then that Yeats proposed to Mme. MacBride for the last time—it was twenty-eight years since first they had met—and only after he had fared no better with her niece, did he seek and find long postponed but enduring happiness with a charming young English girl.

* * *

Yeats had been singing of his passion for Maude for six years when he was introduced to Lady Gregory in Galway. Lady Gregory was then a widow of forty-five. "I cannot realize the world without her," he wrote after twelve years of friendship. "She has been mother, friend sister and brother." In her country estate of Coole, Lady Gregory nursed the wounds inflicted by Miss Gonne. The household at Coole was geared to the poet's comfort. Heavy rugs in the hall stilled all noise before his door to which maids glided at intervals with cups of broth to strengthen his muse. Lady Gregory was never addicted to magic but she had been active in collecting the folk lore of Galway and the material she furnished Yeats provided him with subject matter for a series of essays which brought him in more money than he had ever before earned. Lady Gregory also encouraged him in his idea for an Irish Theater in which his first oddly assorted partners were Edward Martyn, Esq., one of the old Catholic landed gentry, and George Moore. Of them Yeats wrote, "Did you ever know a holy man but had a wicked man for his comrade?" Lady Gregory stirred up much Dublin society and Unionist interest in the performance of Yeats's "Countess Cathleen" and Martyn's "Heather Fields" for which Martyn paid the bills. When Moore's and Martyn's interest cooled, Yeats induced Maude Gonne, now in the Sinn Fein, to play the old woman symbolizing Erin in "Cathleen Ni Houlihan" in 1902; crowds of working people came from the Gaelic League, and The Irish National Theatre was born. Strangely enough its continuance was due to Yeats's esoteric excursions for it was one of the English Cabalists of the Order of the Golden Dawn, Miss A. E. F. Horniman, who, after seeing the Irish plays in London, told Yeats she would give him a theater.

Thanks to her generosity the Abbey Theatre opened in Dublin in 1904 with Yeats's drama of Cuchulain, "On Baile's Strand," and Synge's "Well of the Saints." These productions and a London season cost Miss Horniman 4000 pounds and she then suggested that a limited company be formed with Yeats, Lady Gregory and Synge as directors to which she would give a subsidy of 800 pounds a year. Synge had been discovered as a student in Paris eight years before by Yeats who sent him to study the people and lore of the Aran Isles so that he might help with the national movement. Nothing could have exceeded Yeats's generous recognition of Synge's genius even when Synge's works became more popular than his own. Mary Colum has described how Yeats talked down an angry crowd after the opening of "The Playboy of the Western World." Yeats had founded the theatre on the dream of producing heroic Gaelic drama but he soon realized that the public demanded more ordinary fare. He was adamant, however, in keeping it clear of political purpose. So little attention was paid by the manager to passing events that, through carelessness, a performance took place on the night of King Edward VII's death to Miss Horniman's rage and disgust. Yeats's personal lack of political bias is shown in three dearest women friends, Maude Gonne, the violent Fenian; Lady Gregory, widow of a Colonial Governor and a traditional Unionist, and Miss Horniman, an Englishwoman. "All literature," he wrote in his essay on Synge, "created out of a conscious political aim in the end creates weakness by creating a habit of unthinking obedience. Literature, created for its own sake, for some spiritual need can be used for politics. Dante is said to have unified Italy."

* * *

In 1923, Yeats was nominated to the first Senate of the Irish Free State under President Cosgrave to whom Russell gave all the support possible in his new paper, *The Irish Statesman*. National unity was the mutual aim of both poets. "Slow exciting work of creating institutions—all coral insects but with some design of the ultimate island," wrote Yeats of the Senate. He puzzled over a way to include the Eighteenth Century Irishmen, Berkeley, Burke, Swift in the Gaelic tradition. That same year he was awarded the Nobel Prize as an English poet.

A.E. and Yeats each made four lecture tours through the United States. "No Irishman since the time of Parnell's great trip here has made so grand an impression," wrote John Quinn of Yeats's first visit. "But yours of all the wings that crossed the sea—Carries the wisest heart and gentlest," sang Gogarty of A.E. Yeats spoke on poetry, the Irish Renaissance and the Theatre of Beauty. In 1930, Russell was invited to speak on his book, "National Being," to Agricultural Colleges and Universities. He found in the West a little community, fifteen years old, which had been created by Daniel Wallace after reading Russell on rural communities. In 1934, the Agricultural Department of the United States asked Russell to come to Washington to give them his advice and the Indian Department was anxious to have him talk to the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona on cooperative methods. Both poets charmed large audiences and were heard over the radio. There can be no doubt but that they and the Abbey Theatre Company aroused a new interest in and respect for Irish culture. In spite of his unorthodoxy, Yeats was invited to Notre Dame University and spent the evening with the clerical faculty swapping ghost stories. Some riots had been staged from political motives at the first performances of "The Playboy" and New York had witnessed an attack on the Union Club for displaying the Union Jack but, in Yeats and Russell, Americans met two passionate Irishmen who had enough philosophical tolerance to expand their energies in the constructive work of an ideal instead of burning them up

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in hatred. Should their Dail Eirann have been possible without the violence they deprecated is another and a difficult question.

In civil wars there is always the dangerous force of disintegration which is a dictator's alibi. It is difficult after any prolonged struggle to keep clear before men's minds the ideal which prompted their first righteous indignation. What Yeats and A.E. accomplished in their impersonal, non-political way was to hold high up above their embattled countrymen the idea of the free ancient land of their bards. Even the poets' strange religious deviations served the practical use of making their Druid heroes the common heritage of North and South, Catholics and Protestants. Could there have been some Spanish literary leaders to sing without ceasing of the glories of an ancient Spain, Communist and Phalangist might have united to turn against the foreign allies who sowed among them the bitterest seeds of revenge. God once used the pagan seer, Baalam, to give help to the Children of Israel; the Ulsterman, A.E., who pronounced himself a pagan but practiced Christian virtues, devoted his life and genius to the well-being of Eire. James Boswell planned the trip to the Hebrides to make a contact between his past and his living hero, Saint Columba and Dr. Johnson; we have always regretted that A.E. avoided any friendship with Saint Patrick in this world. We hope that now that mistake has been rectified.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE personal reflections which I had intended for this column had scarcely been finished before the entire picture of my recently changed relations with journalism suddenly expanded to great proportions. For I shall be leaving—in fact I shall have left, by plane—before these words can be read by most readers of THE COMMONWEAL to spend Holy Week and Eastertide in Jerusalem, where, too, Archbishop Spellman of New York will be in the course of his epic, world-wide journey.

For I have entered the service of the North American Newspaper Alliance, as a special correspondent who will do his best to obtain suitable material for cabled and radio articles and news-stories in Africa, the Near East, Palestine, Irak, Russia, China, India, Australia, Latin America and way stations; not to mention those parts of Europe still possible for an American journalist to visit, such as England and Eire, Portugal, Spain, Turkey.

I shall continue, by kind permission of the NANA, to contribute my column to THE COMMONWEAL. This great syndicate serves some fifty great daily papers in North America, but perhaps its puissant Board of Directors won't mind my saying, as I think, that in several respects the little COMMONWEAL is as important as the best of the lot. However, there is no time—fortunately—for me to try to explain this rather puzzling point; for now I must rush back to Washington for visas and all sorts of other queer, war-time, red-tape proceedings.

Communications

BUILD SHIPS FASTER

Pittsfield, Mass.

TO the Editors: I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the article in THE COMMONWEAL of April 2 by William Brownell, "We Can Build Ships Faster," and to add a word in corroboration of his remarks. He said many things that needed saying, and which some of us who have had similar opportunities for observation and comment have perhaps unwisely left unsaid. After reading his article, which preserves so well a tone of positive criticism, I am convinced that more such candid expression of dissatisfaction with the "war effort," aimed at self-criticism rather than pharisaical condemnation of one group by another, would do no end of good. We might clear the air of a great deal of cant which nobody conversant with the facts can possibly believe. Until censorship makes such criticism impossible, as giving aid and comfort to the enemy, it will keep us from feeling too comfortable about our current performance.

The article has its amusing sidelights for one like myself who has worked for the past year in an ordnance plant. There is scarcely a single item in Mr. Brownell's whole catalogue of the ships that hasn't some counterpart in my own experience. Yet invariably, when groups of us have discussed the problem, and the inevitable question, "I wonder if it is this way everywhere else," has been asked, someone has countered with, "And to think that Kaiser can put out a whole ship in a couple of weeks!" How many of us, O Mr. Brownell, have you robbed of a fond illusion! Fortunately, the war will not be won by people in love with illusion. If in the interest of truth we stop deluding ourselves about our vaunted efficiency, we may "build ships faster," and do many other things more swiftly, more effectively, and more intelligently.

A. S. RYAN.

CHAPLAINS

Flushing, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In writing so informatively upon Catholic chaplains in your issue of April 2, 1943, Rev. F. X. Murphy, C.SS.R., of Washington, D. C., committed the pardonable error—pardonable in this case since he obviously relied upon recently published data—of dating back the pioneer Catholic chaplain in the U. S. Army to the year 1846.

Any student of history, who values factual accuracy above one-sided religious bias, will discover upon extended research that the first U. S. Catholic Army chaplain, Rev. Francois Louis Chartier de Lotbiniere, a Recollect of Quebec Diocese, was appointed by General Benedict Arnold on January 26, 1776, and ratified by the Continental Congress the following August, to serve as chaplain to Colonel Jas. Livingston's First Congressional Regiment, incidentally mainly composed of French-Canadians, —an office this French-Canadian priest held until 1781.

The remarkable angle upon the appointment of a French-Canadian priest to the chaplaincy is that, besides

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being the very first Catholic so honored by Congressional act, Father Lotbiniere was likewise the *pioneer army chaplain,* regardless of religious belief, who was officially appointed by Congress to serve American troops, which is an historical fact so generally unknown as to warrant nation-wide publicity in a crisis this nation is now experiencing.

WILLIAM A. L. STYLES, M.D.

RICKENBACKER

Hollywood, Cal.

TO the Editors: Just a note on Harry Sylvester's review of Rickenbacker's book.

He seems to treat Rickenbacker rather harshly. Perhaps I can be a bit harsh too.

I suppose the labor unions are losing some of their gains of the past. (Sacrifice is normal in war time.) Perhaps they are relinquishing a grasp on some things (God bless them!), but what in "Hell" do you think we of the armed forces are doing? Are we permitted to keep that which we had gained prior to the war? We were told once that we would certainly get our jobs back when we returned. What do you think?

The labor unions are getting into the same positions as Hitler and Tojo once were: lots of power but asking too much. They will have to swallow their pride or else be humbled by a returning soldiery.

I can imagine you saying that this is indeed an hysterical statement. And indeed it is. Just as hysterical as was Sylvester's treatment of Rickenbacker.

Come on, Sylvester, employ that balance that makes for a real Catholic writer. After all, you are not just a *writer*—you are a *Catholic* writer. Act like one.

LIEUT. J. A. HAGERTY.

NOTES ON FASCISM

Chicago, Ills.

TO the Editors: May I again congratulate you on the three Bernanos articles? They are remarkable, as he is remarkable. What language and what spirit, and how very necessary for the world!

I expected to see some letters of comment on the articles, but whether it is because you have not published them or whether they have not come in, it is just as well. He has a very great style, and to dedicate it to struggling against the forces of evil is a glorious thing.

MRS. FRANK R. LILLIE.

Bethany, Pa.

TO the Editors: The Italian quotation in Georges Bernanos's article is enough to arouse disgust and indignation from any Christian heart. For years these words have haunted me. And so have the following ones:

> Sir Bindon and our leading brigade had themselves been heavily attacked the night before. They had lost hundreds of animals and twenty or thirty men, but otherwise were none the worse. Sir Bindon sent orders that we were to stay in the Mamund Valley and lay it waste with fire and sword in vengeance. This accordingly we did, but with great precautions. We proceeded systematically, village by village, and we destroyed the houses, filled up the wells, blew down the towers, cut down the great

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shady trees, burned the crops and broke the reservoirs in punitive devastation. So long as the villagers were in the plain, this was quite easy. The tribesmen sat on the mountains and sullenly watched the destruction of their homes and means of livelihood. . . . At any rate, at the end of a fortnight the valley was a desert, and honour was satisfied. (The Right Honorable Winston S. Churchill, "A Roving Commission." Scribner, 1930.)

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

Mrs. Bishop fails, we believe, to appreciate the distinction Bernanos would make between actions prompted by imperialism, and actions prompted by sheer wantonness. Both are bad; the latter is utterly without justification. And if this is simply an ET TU *accusation—"and so is your old man"—the choice of Mr. Churchill seems too deliberately restrictive. After all, where are our Indians, what did Sherman burn on his march to the sea, what of the Belgians in the Congo, etc.,* AD NAUSEAM?—THE EDITORS.

* * *

Burton Le Doux has asked us to emphasize that his recent article on Quebec was submitted a full month before any exposé of the Shipshaw power development appeared in the press.

The Stage & Screen

Oklahoma

THE Theatre Guild presents this musical. As a play I will put it down at once at zero value. Its dramatic qualities are nil, unless you like the simple-mindedness of a horse opera united with highly conventionalized love interest.

Songs and dances make "Oklahoma" something fetching. Richard Rodgers supplied the music and Oscar Hammerstein II the lyrics. "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "Many a New Day" and "People Will Say" should soon be popular. They are sung pleasingly enough by Alfred Drake and Joan Roberts. Comic touches depend on Joseph Buloff, as the Persian peddler loose in Oklahoma territory about 1900. The dances of Agnes de Mille are refreshingly original. The production owes much to settings by Lemuel Ayers whose conception of Oklahoma farmland is, I do not doubt, an improvement on what nature has done for that land. Rouben Mamoulian directed. *(At the St. James.)*

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The Family

BROADWAY was unsympathetic to "The Family" and it closed after a few performances. The play is Victor Wolfson's version of the novel by Nina Federova. I found it an absorbing study of the triumph of an idea of order over material obstacles. A family of White Russians, occupying a house in the British concession in Tientsin, China, is barely holding its own with revenues from lodgers. This Family, however, has the power of life, springing from virtues of love, respect, obedience, self-control. Its spiritual structure preserves it from splitting into self-contained individuals. While it remains intact, the family is able to absorb and transform strangers, who enter as lodgers but remain as family members. The Japanese invasion dissolves the family bonds, but under circumstances which give us hope that its dispersed members will not fare too badly, thanks to their training by the Family. As Granny, Lucile Watson gave a moving performance. Elisabeth Fraser as Lida, seventeen and in love, was enchanting. Evelyn Varden, Arnold Korff, Nicholas Conte and Carol Goodner should be particularly mentioned as part of a large cast which was satisfactory in all respects. *(At the Windsor.)*

Ziegfeld Follies

THIS Shubert conception of the "Ziegfeld Follies" is fast, noisy, topical and dirty. Top billing goes to Ilona Massey and Arthur Treacher as well as Milton Berle, but the former contributes little. I could not hear the words being sung by Miss Massey. Her foreign-accented voice was lost in the vastness of the Winter Garden. Milton Berle, a first rate comedian, is given a form of "comedy" to develop which to my mind is vile in the highest degree. I refer to the unnatural theme which disfigures this musical and gains its inspiration from the Minsky workshops.

Jack Cole's dances are ultra-modern translations of the Zoot Suit mentality, and though this mentality is as alien to most of us as that of the Hottentots, the dances are captivating.

Dean Murphy's imitations of Clark Gable, Willkie, F.D.R., Mrs. Roosevelt and others brought down the house. I have seen them on several occasions and find they bear up well under repetition. My recollection is that the F.D.R. imitation used to be somewhat satirical. Now it is straight admiration, which probably is a sign of the times. *(At the Winter Garden.)*

JAMES N. VAUGHAN.

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A Woman's Home Is in the Place

"FLIGHT FOR FREEDOM" tells the story of a woman whose aspiration was to be a great flier. In spite of grease smudges and masculine clothes, Rosalind Russell makes Tonie Carter attractive to look at. But even Miss Russell, who gives an excellent performance, cannot make an attractive character out of a woman whose morals are as dubious as Tonie's. One of the men in her life is the world famous flier, called "a flier's flier." Fred MacMurray plays the rôle of hero and cad with sparkling eyes, but with a slight uncertainty of what is expected. Tonie is persuaded to spend an extra-curricular week-end with him, but then is given a jolt when he kisses her good-bye and indicates clearly that he prefers flying to her. This brush-off inspires Tonie to beat Randy's record. The other man is an inventor (Herbert Marshall) who suffers in silence while he grows wealthy on Tonie's successes with his planes; he finally comes through with a proposal when more glamorous Randy seems to be out of the picture. After Tonie has received world acclaim, the US Navy steps into her life, and subtly suggests that they'd like to get some photos of the Japanese fortifications.

Now if Tonie could get lost nearby, the Navy would come to her rescue and take some snapshots. Tonie gets as far as New Guinea, where she learns that the Japanese are aware of the whole plan and intend to rescue her quickly. So Tonie gets up early one morning, flies near the Mandated Islands, sends out an S.O.S., commits suicide by crashing her plane into the ocean. Years later, we see Randy bombing the Jap fortifications with the help of photographs made by Americans who hopelessly tried to look for Tonie. All this seems contrived and unreal. David Hempstead's production is good; and many of the flying scenes are interesting. But the cliché situations of a maid and two men detract from the novelty of a flying heroine. Director Lothar Mendes manages to work emotion into his picture occasionally, but most of it is cold. And the heroine's heroism is a moot question.

"*Hit Parade of* 1943" is just the picture for the tired business man, tired war worker, tired soldier and tired you. It moves along swiftly; it is pepped-up with funny situations and clever small talk and, best of all, it has a supply of lively tunes which go far to make it live up to its title. Director Albert S. Rogell pays just enough attention to plot to keep you interested in why people are doing what. And for a change, a musical picture has an amusing story. Susan Hayward plays a young song writer who tries to get even with song-stealer John Carroll by ghost writing for him and then springing a big exposé. John is made up of equal parts of cad, wolf and prince charming. Love rears its pretty head; Susan and John realize they were made for each other, write a swell tune called "A Change of Heart," and b. gets g.

Frank Gill, Jr., wrote the original screenplay to which Frances Hyland added some occasional snappy repartee. The two principals are aided by smooth Gail Patrick who is required to be as catty as she is beautiful in the other-woman rôle, and by Walter Catlett and Eve Arden, both of whom are adept at making a funny situation seem funnier. Everybody concerned, including Producer Albert

OUTSTANDING —

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COMMONWEAL calls this "The best overall picture of the true significance of the 1940's in the history of Western Civilization. The book reaches its climax in the section devoted to 'The Secularization of Western Culture.' A brilliantly written analysis of why we are where we are today."

ADVANCE says: "Christopher Dawson is a historical philosopher whose judgments have great weight. It is a book of major importance in the discussion of Christianity's present and future problems."

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RELIGION IN SOVIET RUSSIA

by N. S. Timasheff, $2.00

Professor Michael Karpovich of Harvard University writes in THOUGHT: "The best study of the subject so far available in any language. Contains much information that will be new to American readers." THE NEW REPUBLIC calls it: "Highly informative, thoroughly documented and rigorously honest . . . a must for all those interested in Russia." TIMASHEFF says: "Religious freedom in Russia, so long as Communists continue to rule, is impossible." This is the book to which Vice-President Wallace referred in his Ohio speech a month ago.

PAGEANT OF THE POPES

by John Farrow, $3.50

This fascinating, authentic, popular narrative of all the popes from Peter to Pius XII continues to be the most popular Catholic best seller in the non-fiction field. It belongs in every family library and in every public library as well. "1900 YEARS IS A LONG TIME." "AUTHENTIC BACKGROUND." "HISTORY FLAMES IN THE MIND AS ONE TURNS THE PAGES OF THIS BOOK."

PLACES: 51 New Essays

by Hilaire Belloc, $2.50

Mr. Belloc says: "I have collected here many an impression of travel of a sort which I fear can never be repeated. I am afraid I do not believe very much in the effect of travel as an aid to wisdom. And yet one can't help wishing that people knew more about other people. The great bond would be religion. A second and feebler bond is travel." Here he writes of MOSCOW REMEMBERED, LUXEMBOURG, THE NORTHERN PEACE, THE TWIN SOUL OF SPAIN, WARSAW REMEMBERED, PORTUGAL, ON FRONTIERS, AVIGNON, DANZIG, ON TRAVEL DURING WAR, CARTHAGE, DAMASCUS, THE LOW COUNTRIES, ON WANDERING, AN EPISODE OF WAR, STOCKHOLM REMEMBERED, etc.

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Lenten Reading

CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ADOLESCENCE. By Rudolph Allers, M. D., Ph.D. "This is an invaluable handbook and guide for educators and parents and all those who are interested in the problem of the adolescent."—*The Sign.* (Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 53 Park Place, New York) **$1.50**

DARK SYMPHONY: The Autobiography of a Negro Convert. By Elizabeth Laura Adams. "I felt as a man blind from birth might well feel before the sudden gift of sight. Familiar things were glorified by the benediction of light into things marvellously new and strange."—*Canadian Register.* (Sheed & Ward) **$2.50**

DOGSLED APOSTLES: or Bishop Crimont and the Alaska Missions. By Alma Savage. "Miss Savage has created mission stories that are literature. The breath of the North sweeps through the activities and horizons of entrancing beauty captivate the eye. . . . The personalities are unforgettable."—*Ave Maria.* (Sheed & Ward) **$2.75**

LIFE OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEO. By Most Rev. Cesare Orsenigo. Translated by Rev. Rudolph Kraus, Ph.D. The attractiveness of the volume is enhanced by several illustrations, copies of famous paintings that depict outstanding incidents in the life of the great reformer. A Spiritual Book Associates selection for April. (B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo.) **$4.00**

RELIGION TEACHING AND PRACTICE. By Rev. Rudolph G. Bandas, Ph. D., S.T.D.et M. For every teacher of religion this work is of vital interest and value. "A valuable text for all engaged in the teaching of Religion and particularly for those working with public school children."—*Journal of Religious Instruction.* (Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 53 Park Place, New York) **$1.50**

THE ROAD OF PAIN. By Rev. Hugh F. Blunt. In this book, Father Blunt tells with great feeling and insight the happenings of the closing days of Christ's life. "Those seeking authoritative, interesting and devotional information will be pleased with this remarkable volume."—*The Sign.* (Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 53 Park Place, New York.) **$1.50**

THIS WAR IS THE PASSION. By Caryll Houselander. Her book is "a veritable defense of life itself in days of overwhelming disaster and agony." "All who are bewildered by the war should read Caryll Houselander." "She has taken the whole world into her heart in which there is no hatred and consequently no fear." (Sheed & Ward) **$2.00**

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J. Cohen, deserves credit for not getting stuffy with this material and for putting on a light musical as a light musical. The production numbers are gay without being too pretentious. "Tahm Boom Bah" and "Harlem Sandman" are especially attractive. The Negro entertainers, allowed to be entertaining in their best style, include Jack Williams, Dorothy Dandridge, the Golden Gate Quartette, who are in excellent form. And the film's good songs are played by not one, but three leading orchestras (not at the same time)—Freddy Martin's, Count Basie's and Ray McKinley's. This year's "Hit Parade" is for relaxation; you don't have to be a jitterbug to enjoy it.

"Hello, Frisco, Hello" is an over-blown musical film done up in a full blaze of technicolor. It comes close to being an escapist item, but its plot is so thin and uninteresting that it doesn't succeed in keeping you preoccupied. Its bright side is in its music that includes several old songs which might well have been your favorites if you're old enough: "By the Light of the Silvery Moon," "Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly?", "Bedelia" and "Hello, Frisco." The sets of the Barbary Coast locale in the early 1900's are on the unrealistic theatrical side, and the characters are shallow papier maché figures. Somehow we can feel no concern over the hero (John Payne) who is a social climber and a snob, and whether he winds up with the Nob Hill society dame (Lynn Bari) or the long-suffering singer (Alice Faye) who patiently waits through nine reels for a proposal. Payne's marriage is dull enough, but his divorce is an obvious piece of plot maneuvering so he can later marry the right girl. Alice Faye, thinner and prettier, is in good voice and sings her songs well. June Havoc and Jack Oakie are effective in the film's lighter moments which are too few for a musical movie. Bruce Humberstone's direction is dull.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Editors' Choice

THE LITTLE PRINCE. *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Reynal.* $2.00.
LE PETIT PRINCE. *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Reynal.* $2.00.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER. *Rackham Holt. Doubleday.* $3.50.

HENRY FORD. *William A. Simonds. Bobbs.* $3.50.

A TIME TO LIVE. *Michael Blankfort. Harcourt.* $2.50.

With the Heart, Rightly

SOMETHING went wrong with his airplane engine and Saint-Exupéry came down in the middle of the African desert and a child came and spoke to him and asked him to draw a picture of a sheep. The child was the little prince of a star so small that it possessed but one flower, and the little prince had to keep weeding the star so that no baobab tree should grow and take up all the space. The little prince after visiting various other stars came to visit the earth and the men who live on the earth and the animals. . . .

The peculiar thing about a story is that sometimes it needs a thousand pages for the telling, sometimes twenty,

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and sometimes it is in a phrase. A story is inseparable from its form and if you try to re-tell a story that someone else has told the story disappears. A story is something you cannot touch without its falling to pieces. There is no use trying to tell the story of the little prince even when one is extremely anxious to tell enough of it so that people will want to read it.

There is even less use telling people how beautiful this story is because no one cares to read even a pretty list of adjectives. Imagine also the difficulty of trying to explain just how and why this story of a little prince from an impossible star who talks to snakes and foxes in the Sahara is not, is never whimsy. Imagine a grown man admitting in print that a story about a little boy who gets himself carried from star to star by holding on to strings attached to birds could possibly be the kind of a story that would deeply affect his emotions. And, too, there would have to be remarks about innocence, loneliness, truth and poetry which would be very difficult and embarrassing to write. Why, the book is printed as if it were a book for children—perhaps the publishers mean children to read it—imagine, then, the embarrassment of reviewing a book for children as if you thought it was a book for grown-ups. Imagine saying that to an adult the story is unforgettable, that it is the story of lost childhood, that it is so sad a story that only grown-ups can understand all that it means.

No, the best thing is to be strictly academic. That is lofty and safe ground to stand on. Thus. Saint-Exupéry in this fable follows in the long line of French moralists. As in Montesquieu's "Lettres Persanes," a character from a world we do not know is brought into the society in which we live. This character is innocent, intelligent and asks questions difficult to answer. Inevitably he is surprized at what he sees: inevitably we are brought to see ourselves as others see us. It is a classic method for laying bare the incongruities of a given civilization. But in "The Little Prince" the tone is no longer that of the eighteenth century moralist: witty, revolutionary and cerebral. The little boy who talks with Saint-Exupéry in the desert looks and laughs at our unchanged absurdities, but the story of his pitiful and brave excursion among us is told with a tenderness the eighteenth century never knew.

Saint-Exupéry himself has drawn and colored the pictures of the little prince, the baobab trees, the boa constrictor who has swallowed the elephant and, on the last page of the book, he has drawn two curving lines and a star and that is the lonely desert after the little prince has left it. There is an edition in English and one with the text in French. Katherine Woods has written the text in English and she has written it very well. We intend to keep both editions, and in no place where they might be mislaid. For no matter how certain we are that we will never forget the little prince, a story, as we have said before, exists in the telling; the little prince lives most brightly in the words to which he owes his existence, and we shall wish, certainly, to read these words again.

One of Our Greatest Americans

DURING THEIR lifetime how little we know of our great men. We see their pictures, know that they are eminent and see how the papers subject them to questions on every imaginable topic. But we do not know what they are really like. The first time we get an inkling is on reading their obituaries, but even then the portrait is likely to be a faulty one.

Dr. Carver was known to the public as a distinguished

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THE BOOKLIST of the American Library Association reports as follows: "The fourth volume completes the presentation of the content of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologica* in modern idiom and straight chapters instead of the original form of objections and answers. The volumes are: I, *The architect of the universe;* II, *The pursuit of happiness;* III, *The fullness of life;* IV, *The way of life.* Since these volumes are an adaptation or popularization of all the ideas in the *Summa,* they serve as a substitute for the more expensive literal translation and will satisfy the lay demand for an understandable version of the *Summa* bearing the Roman Catholic imprimatur." Does your public library have a copy? $3.75 a volume.

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THE CATHOLIC WORLD says: "The appearance of this book marks a new high in the achievements of Thomism in this country. . . . The very names of Maritain, Adler, Allers and John A. Ryan are a guarantee of high grade writing. Many will be pleasantly surprised to find articles equally good from men who are not as well known. . . . One imagines that if St. Thomas wrote an article about 'The Future of Representative Government' today, he would write it very much as Father Farrell has written it. . . . Yves Simon's paper is a partial answer to the question: how can the truth which we possess be put to work in a society of free men who are for the most part not Catholics? . . . Father Brennan and his collaborators are to be congratulated. There is a uniformity of excellence which is a rarity in a book of this kind."

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
by Gilbert Keith Chesterton, $2.50

In the introduction Chesterton says: "This book makes no pretence to be anything but a popular sketch of a great historical character who ought to be more popular. Its aim will be achieved if it leads those who have hardly ever heard of St. Thomas Aquinas to read about him in better ways." THE LIVING CHURCH this week in a survey of the literature of St. Thomas Aquinas says, "Chesterton is the best start for a beginner."

AN INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
by Jacques Maritain, $2.75

THE THOMIST recently devoted a whole volume to a series of essays in tribute to Jacques Maritain, whom many consider the greatest living Catholic philosopher. This most popular of his books is the best introduction to philosophy yet written, and can be read by the layman or used as a text for collegiate studies.

SECOND SOWING: the Life of Mary Hardey
by Mother Margaret Williams, $3.50

In a review published in BOOKS ON TRIAL, Mary E. Carroll of *Barat College of the Sacred Heart,* Lake Forest, says: "It is a book of real historical significance, a very worth while addition to any library. . . . In a day when novices were frequently so young 'that it was necessary to lengthen their habits once or twice before they had finished growing,' Mary Anne Hardey became Sister Aloysia of the Religious of the Sacred Heart before she was sixteen, made her vows at seventeen, and became a Mistress General in the same year. . . . But youth was a fault she was correcting day by day, and the story of her rectification of this flaw as she progressed to Reverend Mother, American provincial, and Assistant General of the order provides the material for her biography. . . . 'The ground-breaking and planting had been done by the time responsibility was laid upon her; she reaped from that grain as it ripened and made her second sowing.' Mother Hardey appears in this account as a shrewd business woman — a far-sighted educator — a sympathetic and humorous mentor of her spiritual daughters. Moral earnestness and psychological insight met in her, as in her remarks on good teaching: 'The secret of bringing up children well lies in the knowledge of the human heart, in patience, in influence, in example. . . . Hold your children through the heart, through their sense of honor, reward them generously, but three or four times a year it is well to come down upon them with the majesty and thunder of the Last Judgment."

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Negro scientist who had lived to a good old age. He had performed certain wonders with the peanut. As with many American Negroes who had risen to renown, he was interested in the betterment of the race. He was for many years connected with Tuskegee. The people who heard his gentle, high-pitched voice over the radio the year he died will never forget it. That sums up what most of us know.

Naturally any full length biography would add a multitude of amplifying details. But this one brings out the real significance of its hero. George Carver was the son of a slave, was soon orphaned, and from earliest days had to fend for himself. When he finally succeeded gaining admission to a college (Simpson, near Des Moines, Iowa), a great struggle had to be fought out within his breast: his desire to serve his race through agriculture won out over his plausible ambition to become a painter. Throughout his life he was deeply religious in an evangelical direction and his untiring scientific and educational endeavors bore witness to his belief that "God had said that every herb and plant could be made of use to man."

George Washington Carver never married; there may have been an early disappointment in love or simply, as he maintained, that he didn't have time. But that did not dull his sociability, which was marked by a sense of fun. He didn't mind wearing shabby clothes regardless of the occasion. He regarded the inordinate value placed on money as the most destructive single influence in the world. He would let his modest salary checks at Tuskegee go uncashed for months, and would always return posthaste the checks that were sent him with inquiries for advice. (He averaged 150 letters a day.) Dr. Carver refused to patent or commercialize for himself his numerous discoveries. Yet, his official biography here seems to indicate that he amassed some $75,000, half of which was lost in 1929, the rest going to start his scientific museum at Tuskegee.

It would be possible to continue for pages about this remarkable man. But one aspect of his life is deserving of special attention. As a child he witnessed a horrible lynching. When he had left all things for college in Minnesota, he was refused admittance at the very door on the ground of race. The woman who then employed him treated him as a chattel. Even at the heyday of his fame, when he was to appear as a lecturer, he had to use the freight elevator, was barred from hotels and restaurants and was seldom permitted to forget that he was a member of a race despised. Personally sensitive and often hurt, he took it like a Christian and redoubled his efforts to endow more and more of his people with capacities for winning their way in the world. He never lost his love for art or his passion for scientific knowledge, but what impelled him onward was a burning zeal for the well-being of his race.

One of the chapters in this challenging book is devoted to the story of Tuskegee and of the two leaders, Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver. It is doubtful if as great a spirit has been developed at any other American institution, students and alumni and faculty in an ardent desire to serve. At a crucial moment when funds were needed to complete the kiln that made their first brick building possible, Booker T. Washington pawned his watch. He did so without regret although he was never able to redeem it. Tuskegee proves that nothing is impossible when hearts are dedicated in a common cause.

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The one thing students wanted to get away from was farming, yet they soon came to undertake it gladly under such inspiring leadership. It is sad to think that today when food production was never more vital, the Department of Agriculture, under political pressure, has decreed a 7 percent increase in cotton acreage despite huge, untouched surplusses—particularly when Dr. Carver for 50 years has been preaching that one-crop farming is the ruination of the South. Cultivation of the sweet potato and the peanut, the two crops from which he developed hundreds of usable products, would be sufficient to assure a balanced diet to impoverished Southern farmers. Besides, the climate there permits the year-round growing of fresh vegetables. All round farming, with rotation of crops, biodynamics and animal husbandry, was the message Dr. Carver brought to his classes, his lecture audiences, the members of his Farmers Institute. Will we never learn?

Genius such as Dr. Carver's is unpredictable. He manifested it through extreme dexterity and love of plants and animals from his earliest childhood. He met a few generous souls along the way but owed nearly everything to his own determination. This is an absorbing story. Few men in modern times spent themselves so unstintingly for their own people and the good of the whole human race.

Some Sort of Genius

HENRY FORD is simply not one of those rich men whom you can dismiss, or shove into some convenient category of exploiter. Whether we like it or not, Mr. Ford has made a tremendous impress on our national life, and if we are honest, we have to admit that this impress has been for good as well as for great evil. The only ground on which the good can be denied is the ground of dismissing as evil the whole of mass production and all the material aspects of the life we live. There are perhaps some violent distributists who wish that industrialism had never come to pass and who consider that all its fruits are bad. But such people, even they themselves must admit, are far removed from the realities of our life today and in any foreseeable future.

Henry Ford more than any other man set the pattern whereby the ordinary citizen could acquire for his own use and advantage machinery of a highly developed sort. Once his principles had been established and had proved successful, the widespread use of mechanical ice-boxes, of washing machines, of a thousand other gadgets was sure to follow upon the widespread use of the automobile. Mr. Ford himself has mass-produced not only cars but farm tractors, boats, and at present airplanes. One of his competitors is in the ice-box business, and doubtless Ford himself would grant that the popularization of the automobile is no more than a symbol of the way in which machinery can be put at the service of individual men and individual families.

William A. Simonds has been associated with Mr. Ford for over twenty years; one could scarcely expect his book to be critical. Yet this does not mean that it is useless. For it assembles within two covers a lot of facts and material with which Americans should be more widely acquainted. It is written in an easy if somewhat florid style, and it is probably not too far off in its major judgments, excepting for those judgments where friendship for Ford obviously would not lead to objectivity. Mr. Simonds, for instance, has nothing to say about the speed-up or the turnover of labor in Ford's plants, about the iniquities

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wrought by mass production in these factories, the inhuman indignities, although he has a great deal to say about the high wages consistently paid by the company, about its fine policy on employing Negroes, and the remarkable things it has done with the employment of blind and crippled men. Ford's anti-Semitism is blankly denied.

From the pages of this biography Ford emerges almost as much of a puzzle as he was before you began. We realize that he has mechanical and managerial genius. We realize that he is a man willing to take chances, to whom money is merely a tool for getting things done and not an end in itself. We hear about his strange charity, which takes very literally the injunction not to let the left hand know what the right hand does. We learn of his well-known friendships for venturesome men, including George Washington Carver, Edison, Burbank, Burroughs We learn of his extraordinary effort to immortalize Edison —a performance which is credible only of Americans. By reading between the lines we realize that here is a mixture of shrewdness and genius and kindness and hardness with no little vulgarity and insensitivity and unconsciousness of human dignity thrown in for seasoning. By and large the eighty years of Henry Ford's life are something which we as a nation can view with a certain pride, even though those years are blighted and marred by many things we cannot help wishing had never happened.

Perhaps the most typical episode related in this book is that of Ford's behavior during the conferences between the company and the auto workers' union when finally this great industrial empire yielded to the pressure and decided to become a closed shop. Mr. Simonds tells us that every so often Ford would separate from the two groups discussing details and sit by himself, announcing that "he was going to represent the public." There is no reason to believe that Mr. Ford was joking. Nor should such behavior be written down as pure eccentricity. For more than anything else Ford has sincerely tried to base all of his actions on the idea that a business is no good unless it produces value for everyone concerned, including the public. He has certainly often fallen short of the mark, but this attitude is probably the only attitude which can make such vast enterprises as his even tolerable.

More Darkness at Noon

THERE are quite a few men and women in America, and especially in New York City, who come from middle or upper-middle class backgrounds and who write books and plays, radio and movie scripts, run magazines and work for newspapers, read the *Nation, New Republic, New Yorker,* and occasionally the *New Masses,* and come under the general heading of "liberals."

Before the Russo-German agreement most of them also came under the heading of "fellow travelers" and since the success of the Russian armies some have returned to that heading. In the interim, however, they became quite outspokenly anti-Stalinist: they remembered that they had always doubted the justice of the Moscow Trials and had deplored the shipping of Russian oil to Italy during the Ethiopian war; they denounced the invasion of Finland.

They were unhappy when they had to break with their Stalinist friends; they felt rather lost and rudderless—without a faith, purpose or unity that could command their loyalty and enthusiasm. This was especially painful because in some cases they continued to admire those friends, feeling, as they might have put it, that "they [the communists] are driven by an inner fire that makes

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them stand up against the terror of the world. Like the early Christians."

The man who wrote those words and made that analogy is Michael Blankfort, who happens to be such a liberal and who has written the story of such a liberal in his new novel, "A Time to Live." Mr. Blankfort is intelligent and sensitive and talented, like many of his kind. He has a strong sympathy for the underdog. He is capable of highminded eloquence and outspoken vulgarity. He knows his own kind and he writes well, so that his book, though neither great nor profoundly moving, should have a pretty good sale among his fellow liberals.

But what worries us more than the book is Mr. Blankfort himself and those others for whom he speaks. We know nothing about the man other than what appears on the jacket, but we put one thing with another and we know that the hero of "A Time to Live" is Mr. B. And it disturbs us a great deal to think that a bright, civilized, highminded American such as Michael Blankfort appears to be does not even consider the ideas of God and Christianity and the Catholic Church as ideas that would occur seriously to such an American. It is true that he thinks of God in a brief flash when either he or his wife is faced with the terrible mystery of death, but taking any satisfaction in that is almost like kicking a man when he's down.

" 'Somewhere I read,' Mallon said, filling his pipe, 'a statement of a German bishop, around the fifteenth century. He said it, of course, about the Catholic Church, but it fits Russia perfectly. "When the existence of the Church," he said, "is threatened, she is released from the commandments of morality. . . . With unity as the end, every means is sanctified, even cunning, treachery, and violence." ' "

It was in "Darkness at Noon" by Arthur Koestler, another bright and gifted liberal, that Mallon read that statement. Whether a German bishop ever became so hopelessly depraved as to try to pass off such devilish heresy as Catholic doctrine we do not know. What is significant, and to a modern Catholic completely sickening, is that in this enlightened day and age two cultivated men like Blankfort and Koestler write books in which the only picture of Catholicism presented to the reader is this ghastly death-mask. There you have "darkness at noon" with a vengeance—a darkness which we American Catholics have done so little to dispel.

Please pass the high-powered searchlights, or a few Heywood Brouns, or the spirit of the early Christians. Pass something, and quick.

More Books of the Week

The Building of Eternal Rome. Edward Kennard Rand. Harvard. $3.50.

WHAT is this "Eternal Rome" that Professor Rand has in mind? Perhaps the readiest answer may be found in the fact that the only spot on earth today which is so far immune from attack by the infernal forces of evil that the Prince of This World has unleashed upon his earthly domain is the city by the Tiber. His book gathers up the things which, together, make the causes of this somewhat extraordinary phenomenon—or, at least, explain it. It is a book which will stir to its depths the nostalgia of anyone who has had the good fortune in his early days to have been introduced to the Latin (and Greek, but particularly the Latin) language, even were it

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only when he "prepped" in the Jesuit *ratio studiorum* of more than half a century ago, and stopped there—as did this reviewer!

And what is such a "reviewer" to do with a book like Professor Rand's, who wears his profound scholarship with an ease and grace that irresistibly recall that witch—there is no other word for her!—Helen Waddell, in her "Wandering Scholars," her "Medieval Latin Lyrics" and her "Peter Abelard," to say nothing of her "Desert Saints"? The honest thing and the only honest thing for him is to give thanks that there has come his way a book which revives, enlarges and enriches the small relics—half-remembered—of the days when he "studied" his Virgil, his Horace, his Cicero and his Livy, and there broke through, from time to time, vague glimpses of the timeless beauties that lay below the syntactical crusts of the "texts" with which he wrestled. Not so many, perhaps, were those glimpses, but as this reviewer devoured Professor Rand's pages it seemed to him that they widened out, grew in distinctness and awakened in him a strong desire to go back to the school benches and do it all over again, this time with a new love and an immensely heightened sensitivity. Moreover, while the author talks as he does to scholars of pith and roundness, this reviewer doubts that they can get as exciting an enjoyment as can those like himself who are no scholars yet did once get a taste of waters from the authentic spring and have not forgotten it.

Professor Rand's theme is, at bottom, the grandeur of Rome—the rugged "morality" that was the basis of the Roman Republic and endured in the best Romans to the end, despite all the horrors of the worst imperial days, before the Christian baptism of the city under Constantine and the subsequent transfer of the Empire to the East. The thread of continuity may seem thin at times, yet there is the thread, and he traces it through the "classical" writings in such fashion as to bring their authors so alive as to stir the reader's lust to know them better. And the concluding passages of his book, cast in the form of a *disputatio* in which the shades of Polybius, Livy, Homer, Horace, Terence, Cicero, Augustine and Dante visit and discourse with him on modern events, will bear careful reading, for it is a devastating comment on the times in which we live. Yet he is no pessimist. The *disputatio* closes with a sort of chorus, a voice, that seemed to include all the voices of the ghostly visitors, and the last sentences read: "Many are the dissensions and frustrations, many are sins and follies in the welfare of the world. But Greece and Rome and the Church of Christ have built an *urbs aeterna* whose timelessness is the right of its citizens upon earth. So Dante learned when his dear teacher, like a father, taught him the old disciplines that make the mind of man eternal here and now."

A book well worthy of its theme from any point of view and sheer delight to read. THOMAS F. WOODLOCK.

The Rise and Fall of the House of Ullstein. Herman Ullstein. S. & S. $3.00.

THE old German publishing houses were headed by men to whom book making was at the same time a hobby and a business. Most of their selections were influenced by the dislikes and the personal fancies of their owners. Often you could classify a new author when you heard what publisher was bringing out his first book. The Ullsteins were the first publishers in Germany to put their publishing house on a strictly business basis. Three-

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quarters of a century ago Leopold Ullstein, a wholesale paper merchant, became a successful publisher of newspapers and magazines. His five sons were trained as lawyers or as merchants in other fields before they were allowed to join their father's firm. Herman Ullstein, the author of this book, had to join a world famous grain concern. After several years' experience he entered his father's firm and started to sell nourishment of the mind with the same sober efficiency he had learned in the grain business.

These modern commercial methods, revolutionary to the old-fashioned continental publishing houses, made the House of Ullstein the most prosperous publishing firm of Germany. It was called by the publishers of the old block "a literary department store." While the selections of most of the old firms were highly specialized, you were able to buy at Ullstein's nearly any brain-food you desired. You were able to choose between the intellectual *Vossische Zeitung* and the half-illiterate *Berliner Morgenpost,* between the popular *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung,* the sophisticated *Die Dame,* the modernistic *Querschnitt* and the swank *Uhu.* You could buy an excellent world history, Veit Valentin's admirable standard work on the German Revolution of 1848-49, but also such superficial hodge-podge as Bruno Goetz's German history and other half-baked merchandise. You might buy some of the best novels of world literature in splendidly printed editions, or the cheap one-mark Ullstein-books, mostly also cheap in literary value.

Herman Ullstein tells this success story with pride and a bitter resentment about the base means whereby the nazis tricked the Ullstein brothers out of both their business and their fortune. As a modest emigré in Manhattan he looks back to the golden days, when the name of Ullstein meant power, influence, even prestige. MAX FISCHER.

Land Where Time Stands Still. Max Miller. Dodd. $3.00.

MAX MILLER, the perennial boy-reporter, went to Baja California in the last autumn before the US went to war. The long peninsula between the Pacific and the Gulf of California comes as close to being a never-never land as any place on this continent. The continent's last aborigines, the Seri Indians, live on an island off its coast. Jesuits, Franciscans and Dominicans, in that order, left their stamp on the desolate land, and their missions still mark prominently the country, not because the missions have waxed and grown great but because the country itself has not grown. It is a land rich in its soil and in its minerals, but water is hard to obtain. Its few settlements are peopled by Mexicans not greatly different from those on the mainland, more isolated and perhaps more gentle. The *Camino Real* still runs the length of it, but you cannot drive it in an ordinary, low-slung car. So that it is always something of a feat when anyone gets below Enseñada.

Miller went the whole way to Cape San Lucas with two naturalists in a specially-built truck. The naturalists were after flora and fauna, and Mr. Miller, in his slightly egregious way, was out collecting "material," that is, photographs and impressions consciously sought. Within the limitations of his powers and his rather clumsy prose, he gives us what seems to be a reasonably accurate picture of the place. La Paz, the pearl-town, badly hit by the disease which has killed pearl oysters for miles around. San Borjas, an abandoned mission where two families live all year and where once a year the mountain people come

Gerard Manley HOPKINS

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Next Week

The April 23 issue of The Commonweal is not another special book number, but its "Editors' Choice" and leading reviews will supply a wealth of invaluable without-fear-or-favor information on the books of the day. And like other issues of The Commonweal these days, it includes distinguished work by noted authors:

GEORGES BERNANOS contributes an illuminating and moving article on the role of the Poor in man's struggle for salvation. Don't miss his "Patience of the Poor" next week.

EILEEN DUGGAN, the noted New Zealand poet, presents a fascinating picture of Father James McDonald, a Kilkenny man, whose ideal was to have "the faith of a Maori." A Marist missionary who became completely one with the primitive people he served.

ARTHUR MOORE: "Farmer John L. Lewis." The editor of the ***Daily Pantagraph*** of Bloomington, Illinois, analyzes the efforts of the United Mine Workers' leader to organize American dairy farmers. An amusing account of a game of bluff.

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for a six-day fiesta at which they dance and drink until exhausted. Jap subs were in the Gulf on the eve of Pearl Harbor, and there also seems good evidence that it was Japs who poisoned the oyster beds because of the competition with their own synthetic pearls. Big horn sheep are still in the Sierra San Pedro Mártir, and the greatest onyx mine in the world is nearby.

Land's end holds a strange interest for most people, and there must be a curious mood over all of this long, narrow land, going on for hundreds of miles with the sea on either side. Mr. Miller does not succeed in conveying this mood. Perhaps this mood is not there to convey. I had a chance to find out last December when I was in Guadalajara and on my way to Mazatlán to take plane for La Paz. I wanted to see the Sinarquist colony near there. But I had talked to many of their leaders in Mexico City, and it was near Christmas. Being a sentimentalist, I came home to be with the children.

So perhaps there is no mood, and Mr. Miller is right. He tells us of the long history of Spanish and American filibustering there, the most recent in 1911. The natives, remembering these violences, have not always been friendly to the US, although Miller assures us that they are now. The Sinarquist colony was not there when he went through, so he is not able to tell us anything of the first allegedly non-violent movement in Mexico. The Sinarquists puzzle our best foreign observers, and the communists hate them bitterly, while the Church, like our State Department, is not sure what to make of them. Their agrarian colony near La Paz would be worth looking at. They are supposedly carrying water on their backs to wrest a living from the bleak land. Their leaders tell me there are 400 in the colony. The communists say there are 40,000 in it, a potential fifth column, although how 40,000 could be supported there, even if food were ferried across the Gulf, is problematical. But the colony, as well as the other two near Hermosillo and Matamoros, is worth looking at. While Baja California awaits a more skilled typewriter than Mr. Miller's. HARRY SYLVESTER.

Mama's Bank Account. Kathryn Forbes. Harcourt. $2.00.

MR. WILLIAM SAROYAN has established a vogue for writing about immigrants and first-generation Americans with affected simplicity and headlong affection. Miss Forbes is in the Saroyan tradition, but her stories of a perfectly charming Norwegian family in San Francisco have a validity of their own, and a gentleness which is lacking in the work of the master. There are seventeen stories in this book and Mama is in all of them; just as she was the mainspring of the family, so she provides the major interest in the tales and adds a genuine character to the gallery of American fictional portraits. If, on occasion, the stories are sentimental or obvious, and some of them are, there is enough vitality in Mama to put them across, triumphantly. J. G. E. HOPKINS.

The Atlantic Charter and Africa. Phelps-Stokes Fund (New York). $1.25.

THIS thoughtful report of the Committee on Africa, the War and Peace Aims suggests important means of settling colonial questions there primarily in the interests of the African people and then for the good of the world. It was prepared before our landing in North Africa and is even more important in the light of our new responsibilities there. It gives the colonial policies of the Free French a real hand.

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The Inner Forum

Arabic in St. Patrick's

IT WOULD have been very surprising for a Moslem visitor to New York's Saint Patrick's Cathedral on Saturday morning, April 3, to see and hear three priests chanting Mass together in his native Arabic.

It would also have been surprising to most American Catholics, for this was only the second time in history that an Eastern rite Mass has been celebrated in the strictly Latin sanctuary of Saint Patrick's. And few Catholics are yet aware that Mass can be, and is today, validly celebrated in Greek, Church Slavonic, Rumanian, Magyar, Arabic, Coptic, Geez (Ethiopian), Syriac and Armenian.

The occasion of Saint Patrick's "concelebration" was the fifth annual conference on Eastern Rites and Liturgies sponsored by the Jesuits of Fordham University, in keeping with the edict of Pius XI that all Catholic universities and seminaries must schedule an Oriental Day at least once a year.

This year the Fordham conference was devoted to consideration of the Byzantine-Melkite rite. The Melkites are Roman Catholics who speak Arabic, live mostly in Syria, Egypt and Palestine and use Arabic in their Byzantine liturgy. Their race is a combination of Greek, Syrian and Arabic, and during the second half of the nineteenth century a good number of them came to America and settled in the New York area, New Jersey, Cleveland, Detroit, Lawrence (Massachusetts) and La Crosse (Wisconsin).

The three Melkite priests who concelebrated the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom at Saint Patrick's were the Right Reverend Archimandrite Bernard Ghos'n, pastor of Saint George's Church in lower Manhattan; the Reverend Nicholas Araktingi, of the Church of the Virgin Mary, Brooklyn; and the Reverend Cyril Anid of Saint Ann's Church, Paterson, New Jersey. "During a concelebration, several priests consecrate the same bread and wine, chanting the words of institution in unison. This custom is observed in the Roman rite only at the ordination of priests and the consecration of bishops, but is a general practice in the Byzantine rite." (*The Eastern Observer*, April 4, 1943.)

CONTRIBUTORS

Carol Ely HARPER has been a newspaper reporter and correspondent for an Oregon newspaper. She has had poetry published in a number of national magazines.

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Robert P. Tristram COFFIN's latest book is "A Book of Uncles." He frequently contributes verse to THE COMMONWEAL.

Jesse STUART, Kentucky school superintendent, is the author of a number of volumes of short stories.

J. L. BENVENISTI is an English distributist, author of several books, including "Iniquitous Contract."

E. V. R. WYATT is drama critic for the *Catholic World*. She has long been a contributor to THE COMMONWEAL.

Thomas F. WOODLOCK, who conducts a column in the *Wall Street Journal*, is the author of "The Catholic Pattern."

Max FISCHER is a European journalist and writer now living in New York.

Harry SYLVESTER, author of "Dearly Beloved," writes for several national magazines.

J. G. E. HOPKINS, who was teaching at the College of Notre Dame of Staten Island, has joined the Merchant Marine.

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